



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

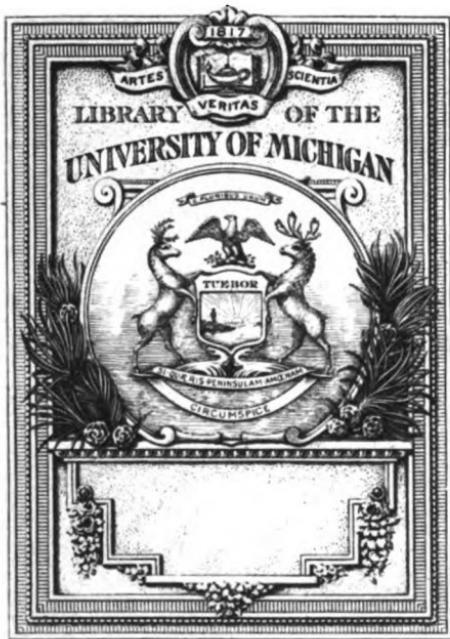
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



THIS BOOK
FORMS PART OF THE
ORIGINAL LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
BOUGHT IN EUROPE
1838 TO 1839
BY
ASA GRAY

DA
30
.T95
1839

4428.

2-178
THE

HISTORY OF ENGLAND:

FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD

TO

THE DEATH OF ELIZABETH.

BY

SHARON TURNER, ESQ., F.S.A. & R.A.S.L.

IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

VOL. VI.

FROM THE CONTINUATION OF THE REIGN OF HENRY THE
SIXTH, TO THE END OF THE REIGN OF
RICHARD THE THIRD.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

LONGMAN, ORME, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS.

1839.

LONDON:

**Printed by Manning and Mason, Ivy-Lane,
Paternoster-Row.**

THE
HISTORY OF ENGLAND:
MIDDLE AGES.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

P R E F A C E

TO THE

FIRST EDITION

OF THE

THIRD VOLUME.

THE Readers of the former Volumes of this History, may reasonably expect some reason or apology for the long delay of the Continuation, which is now submitted to their perusal. To begin a Work of this sort, and to leave it imperfect, has an appearance of caprice and injustice; which, if it had been voluntary, would have been censurable. This imputation the Author is anxious to avert. He feels that, when he invited the attention of the Public to a new History of England, he contracted an implied obligation to complete his undertaking to the best of his ability, without any protracted intermission. The pleasure he experienced in its composition, would have been an additional incitement to realize both his own wishes, and the expectations of his readers; but the course of life is as little under our command in its individual, as in its political direction. A debilitating illness succeeded the publication of the former volumes; at times so severe, that not only writing, but even reading was often

impossible. Enough strength only remained to fulfil other duties of a more imperious nature ; and tho a strict and persevering self-management has restored a considerable degree of exertion and comfort, during the first part of the day ; yet the evenings, so valuable and so interesting to the student, who has the usual occupations of life to pursue, are still the periods of so much weakness and indisposition, that the Author's only security, for a night of repose and a day of efficiency, is an abstinence from all that can enliven or excite, as evening advances. The most retired quiet, and the most forbearing suspension of every exertion at that time, have become indispensable to keep life from relapsing into a state of suffering, which would make it both undesirable and useless.

Under these circumstances, all that could be done, was to use the occurring intervals of leisure and ease, to inspect such original documents, and new authorities, as could be found ; examine the more known ones ; arrange their scattered information ; compare their various claims to attention ; and compose from all, such a narrative of the most important and interesting facts as could be presented to an intelligent reader of the present day, as not unworthy of his consideration and belief. But it is obvious, that these intervals were to be waited for ; that they would arrive with great intermissions ; and that unusual lapse of time must ensue before the Author could accomplish his wishes.

By gradual perseverance, trespassing inevitably, tho unwillingly, on the indulgence of his friends, the task advanced ; and this last summer has enabled the Author to complete, by this volume, what he considers to be the second series of the English History. The first was given in the work on the Anglo-Saxons, which brought down our national historiography to the Norman conquest. The second period, which comprises the History of England during the MIDDLE AGES, commences at the accession of William the Conqueror, and terminates with the death of Henry VII. Here the middle ages of Europe naturally close with the conclusion of the fifteenth century. A new world, quite unlike the former, then arose, from which all our modern history has flowed, and with which it is, and will long be, inseparably connected. In England, this begins with the reign of Henry VIII. during whose life all the great innovations, states, interests and establishments became prominent, which have so marked and elevated all the succeeding periods. Hence the present volume, with the two former ones, may be, not unfitly, termed, THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND DURING THE MIDDLE AGES. Describing our public transactions, the personal portraits of our kings, and the main features and changes of our national character and costume ; they are meant to exhibit a period of society, and a course of events, unlike either Grecian, Roman, or Asiatic story ; yet not less peculiar, original, striking, and important. As the History of the Anglo-Saxons formed a distinct subject

of itself, ending the first series of our annals at the Norman conquest, so the five volumes of the present Work, exhibit another completed division of our national fortunes, during the middle ages, by detailing the second series of our national historiography. The two Works narrate the history of our never retrograding Country, from the earliest times down to the year 1509 ; and so long a period of research, will, perhaps, be accepted by the indulgent Public, as a sufficient performance of an undertaking too sanguinely entered upon by the Author, when, in the flush and sunny hopes of youth, he presumed to think of writing the History of England, even to his own times. It would be easy, like Smollet, to do so, if only the common authorities were to be consulted ; and the reader had to be told, in new words, nothing but what he was familiar with before. But for any one to dig below the ordinary surface of events, and give more just and original views of the conduct and fortunes of our continually improving and picturesque ancestors, from unexamined sources, a time, an attention, a strength, and a degree of labor are required, which make it almost, if not quite impossible, for one individual to give to the Public a complete history of England on this plan. That the present Author, now in his fifty-fifth year, with a broken constitution, will be able to make any advances into the third and last series of it, must as yet be an uncertainty. His desire may be undiminished, but the performance depends so entirely on agencies

beyond his own control, that he can but look at the task like a wistful mariner on a distant land, which however inviting to his eye, many circumstances may make inaccessible to his personal approach.

Throughout the present Work, it has been an invariable principle, to compose it, as far as could be done, not only from original, but also from contemporary authorities ; and with few exceptions, this has been effected. Some care has been also used to convey to the reader, either in the text or in the notes, the ideas and feelings of the times, on the events that are mentioned ; and to narrate them, as often as it could be done, with circumstances that display the manners of the different periods. This was thought preferable to increasing the bulk of the work, by adding separate chapters on such subjects. Much of our laws and constitution has been, in the same manner, interwoven with the work.

In studying the history of The Maid of Orleans, the former materials of it were found to be neither sufficiently authentic nor explanatory. It was desirable to inspect her own account of herself at her different examinations, and the depositions of the numerous witnesses who were interrogated concerning her ; both of which sources of curious information had not been consulted by any preceding historian. M. Le Brun de Charnettes, in his recent work on her, in four volumes octavo, has printed all her

answers ; and has collected the substance of the evidence given upon every part of her life. And this has enabled me to fulfil my own wishes, of describing one of the most remarkable phenomenons that has ever emerged in any nation, to accomplish a great political revolution..

The important effect of the state of our church establishment, on the civil wars, between the houses of York and Lancaster, has not been hitherto adequately observed. Much assistance on this interesting subject has been derived from some neat MS. extracts in the British Museum, of our BALE, which he made from contemporary authorities, that have disappeared from our curiosity. The transcripts also in the same valuable library, made from similar documents, by our worthy JOHN STOW, which he has not used in his own chronicle, probably from their having come to his knowlege after its publication, have furnished much new and interesting matter to the present volume. Such light has been derived from these and other sources of original information, that it is hoped, the reign of Henry VI. will no longer be deemed a confused mass of unconnected events, as it has been hitherto described, and indeed too much appeared to be ; but that it will be found to be an intelligible and interesting series of important incidents and characters, which in their causes, as well as in their results, will deserve the contemplation, and apply to some of the circumstances of the present age.

In the reigns of Edward V. and Richard III. it has been endeavored to reduce the obloquy under which the latter has labored, to its just proportion; and to distinguish how much of his exaggerated crimes is fairly imputable to himself, and how much to his age and party. On this branch of his subject, the Author has been greatly indebted to the curious volume in the Harleian collection, which is reputed to have belonged to the celebrated Burleigh; but whose last possessor was the historian John Strype. It is a copious register and collection of the grants and public documents, signed by Richard III. Some are copied at full length, but of the largest part only the substance is given. It seems to be the same MS. which is a few times quoted in the annotations in the first volume of bishop Kennett's collection of English historians, under the name of King Richard's Diary, and signed J. S. probably John Strype. Its documents throw new light on many parts of Richard's reign and conduct; and have enabled the Author to draw this singular man, more in his real shape and features, than has yet been done.

From all these authentic sources, it was unavoidable that many new facts and correcter views of old ones, should be derived on the most important part of the reigns handled in the present volume; but no space has been occupied, in pointing out the mistakes of preceding historians. This would have swelled the bulk of the work, and could only be an unpleasing,

as well as an invidious, and an ungenerous employment. A remark of Aristotle, applies strongly to the last writers on every subject, especially on history and science. He says, in his *Metaphysics*, “If Timotheus had not lived, we should not have possessed much sweet music. But if Phrynes, his master, had not also existed, we should never have had Timotheus.” Every later historian, whatever may be his own merits or researches, must be greatly indebted to the labors of his predecessors. They had the wild or desert country first to clear and plant; and if some sweeter flowers, richer fruits, or more abundant harvests, have been since obtained or introduced; these would never have appeared, if the former cultivators had not preceded. Each antecedent author has added some truth, removed some mistake, and opened some new views; and the present writer acknowledges, with gratitude, that if those whom he has succeeded, had not published their elaborate or intelligent works, his History would not, and most probably could not have been composed. He follows in their train; not, he hopes, without bringing some offerings of his own; but desirous never to be deemed insensible to their merits, or detracting from their praise.

EPSOM, 22 March 1823.

T A B L E
O F
C O N T E N T S.

V O L U M E III.

B O O K III.

C O N T I N U A T I O N O F R E I G N O F H E N R Y VI.

1429—1433.

C H A P. I.

G O V E R N M E N T I N E N G L A N D , U N T I L T H E C O N G R E S S
O F A R R A S .

A.D.		page
1429.	PROTECTORATE ended - - - - -	2
	Henry VI. crowned at Westminster, 6th November - - - - -	3
1430.	lands in France, 23d April - - - - -	6
	----- entrance into Paris, and coronation, 17th December - - - - -	8
1431.	----- returns to England, 9th February - - - - -	10
	Pageants exhibited to him - - - - -	ib.
	Insurrection of Lollards, 1430 - - - - -	14
1432.	Gloucester opposes the government - - - - -	15
	Discussions on peace with France - - - - -	19

C H A P. II.

**CONTINUATION OF THE WAR, AND NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE
WITH FRANCE—THE KING'S MARRIAGE WITH MARGARET.—
1435—1444.**

A.D.		page
1435.	Congress of Arras - - - - -	22
	Burgundy's peace with Charles, 21st Sept. - - - - -	23
	Duke of Bedford's death, 13th Sept. - - - - -	24
	Burgundy attacks the English - - - - -	25
1439.	Negotiations at Gravelines - - - - -	26
1440.	Release of Duke of Orleans - - - - -	28
	Further events of the French war - - - - -	30
	Henry VI. kept from public business - - - - -	31
	Beaufort's ministry - - - - -	34
	Henry marries Margaret - - - - -	35
1444.	Her arrival, May - - - - -	38

C H A P. III.

**DEATHS OF THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER AND CARDINAL
BEAUFORT.**

A.D.		page
	Suffolk's administration - - - - -	41
1444.	Duchess of Gloucester accused - - - - -	42
	Former arrest of Margery in 1432 - - - - -	43
	Execution of the accused - - - - -	45
	Penance of the duchess - - - - -	46
1447.	Arrest of the duke of Gloucester - - - - -	48
	His death, 23d February - - - - -	49
	Suffolk's conduct to his household - - - - -	50
	Death of Cardinal Beaufort, 11th April - - - - -	52
	His speech on his death-bed - - - - -	53
	Character of Gloucester - - - - -	55
	Lydgate's panegyric on him - - - - -	56

C O N T E N T S.

xv

C H A P. IV.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE DUKE OF SUFFOLK—HIS IMPEACHMENT AND DEATH.

		page
Suffolk complains of calumny	- - - -	59
Character of his government	- - - -	60
1449. Somerset desires succors in France	- - - -	61
York accuses bishop Moleyns	- - - -	62
Suffolk's speech	- - - -	64
1450. His impeachment, January	- - - -	65
His exile by the king	- - - -	69
Debts of the crown	- - - -	70
Suffolk killed, May	- - - -	71
Popular song against him	- - - -	74

C H A P. V.

RENEWAL OF THE WAR IN FRANCE—DISASTERS—TUMULTS IN ENGLAND—JACK CADE'S INSURRECTION.

		page
Breach of the truce with France	- - - -	76
1450. Moleyns and another bishop killed	- - - -	78
John Cade's insurrection	- - - -	79
Popular complaints of the government	- - - -	80
Dr. Gascoyne's statements	- - - -	89
Subjects of the public discontent	- - - -	91

C H A P. VI.

**REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE ENGLISH PAPAL HIERARCHY
AT THIS PERIOD—THE DIFFERENT ATTACKS MADE UPON
IT. THE REFORMATION URGED—AND ITS RETALIATED
HOSTILITIES AND PERSECUTIONS ON THOSE WHO CRITICISED
AND OPPOSED IT.**

	page
Occam's dialogue - - - - -	98
Statutes restraining bequests to the church - - - - -	101
Contests of the crown with the church and Pope - - - - -	102
Clergy resisting the Pope - - - - -	108
Papal see attacking the government and clergy - - - - -	109
Complaints against the clergy - - - - -	111
Effect of the mendicant orders - - - - -	114
Their superior attainments - - - - -	115
Their attacks on the church - - - - -	116
Carmelites preach against its wealth - - - - -	122
Opposing sermons on the subject - - - - -	123

C H A P. VII.

**ATTACKS ON THE CHURCH FROM ITS PAROCHIAL CLERGY—
VICES OF THE PRELATES—SPREAD OF REFORMING OPI-
NIONS—THE DEFENDERS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT—ITS
PERSECUTIONS AND SEVERITIES.**

	page
William Taileur's doctrines - - - - -	127
Other clergymen preaching - - - - -	128
State employments of the clergy - - - - -	131
English books against the papal system - - - - -	133
Ill effects of pilgrimages - - - - -	137
Resistance of the establishment - - - - -	138
Netter of Walden's works - - - - -	139
Persecuting statutes and orders - - - - -	141
An old ballad against Lollards - - - - -	144
Ill effects of persecutions - - - - -	145
Increase of heresy and heretics - - - - -	151
Lyndewood's summary of the laws against them - - - - -	154

C H A P. VIII.

COMPETITION OF YORK AND SOMERSET.

A.D.		page
	Rights of York and Lancaster to the crown	155
	Gradual losses in France	161
1450.	Siege of Caen, April	162
	Somerset surrenders it	163
	York in Ireland	164
	- - - advances to London, Sept.	ib.
	His complaint against Somerset	166
1451.	He impeaches Somerset	169
	- - assembles an army	170
	- - encamps at Dartford	171
	- - is taken prisoner to London	ib.
	Loss of Aquitain, Aug.	172
	Somerset's power	173
	Character of Henry VI.	175

C H A P. IX.

HENRY'S DANGEROUS ILLNESS—YORK APPOINTED PROTECTOR—
HIS DISMISSAL—SOMERSET'S ASCENDENCY—YORK COLLECTS
AN ARMY—FIRST BATTLE OF ST. ALBANS—YORK AGAIN
APPOINTED PROTECTOR—AGAIN DISPLACED—RECONCILIA-
TION OF THE CONTENDING PARTIES.

A.D.		page
1453.	The king's illness	177
1454.	Cardinal Kemp's death	178
	Lords visit the king	179
	York made Protector	180
1455.	Somerset's re-ascendancy	183
	Beginning of the civil war, May	184
	First battle at St. Albans, 22d May	185
	King's second illness	190
	York again made protector	191
1456.	- - - dismissed in Feb.	192
	Queen's plans against him	193
1458.	Henry's effort to conciliate	ib.
	Old ballad on the occasion	195

CHAP. X.

CIVIL WAR—BATTLE OF BLOREHEATH—FLIGHT OF YORK AND HIS FRIENDS—WARWICK AND EDWARD INVADE FROM CALAIS—BATTLE OF NORTHAMPTON—QUEEN'S FLIGHT—YORK'S FIRST CLAIM TO THE CROWN—BATTLE AT WAKEFIELD—YORK BEHEADED—SECOND BATTLE OF ST. ALBANS.

A.D.		page
1459.	Civil war begins again - - - - -	199
	Battle of Bloreheath, Sept. - - - - -	200
	York fails at Ludlow, Oct. - - - - -	202
1460.	Expeditions from Calais, Jan. - - - - -	204
	Warwick consults with York, in Dublin - - - - -	206
	Warwick lands in Kent, June - - - - -	ib.
	Complaining articles of the men of Kent - - - - -	208
	Battle of Northampton, July 10 - - - - -	210
	York claims the crown, Oct. - - - - -	213
	His succession enacted - - - - -	215
	Battle of Wakefield, Dec. 30 - - - - -	217
	York killed - - - - -	219
1461.	Battle of Mortimer's Cross, Feb. 2 - - - - -	ib.
	Second battle of St. Albans, Feb. 7 - - - - -	220
	Edward arrives in London - - - - -	222
	- - - - made king, 4th March - - - - -	223
	Margaret retires to the north - - - - -	224

B O O K IV.

REIGN OF EDWARD IV.

1461—1483.

C H A P. I.

BATTLE OF TOWTON—EDWARD'S CORONATION—BATTLE OF HEXHAM—HENRY VI. TAKEN—EDWARD'S MARRIAGE—PROMOTION OF THE QUEEN'S FRIENDS—WARWICK'S DISCONTENT.

A.D.		page
1461.	Margaret's success at Ferrybridge	227
	Battle of Towton, March 29	228
	Edward crowned, June 29	232
	Margaret escapes to Scotland	ib.
	The church against Edward	238
1464.	Battle of Hegeley Moor, April 25	239
	of Hexham, May 8	ib.
	Edward's private marriage, May 1	242
	The consequences	244
	Lord Rivers at the tournament	ib.
	Queen's family promoted	245
	Warwick's discontent	247
1468.	Speech to the Parliament, May 17	251

C H A P. II.

WARWICK'S CONSPIRACIES AGAINST EDWARD—ROBIN OF REDESDALE'S INSURRECTION—BATTLE OF HEDGEOTE FIELD—EDWARD'S CAPTURE AND ESCAPE—BATTLE OF LOSE-COAT FIELD—WARWICK'S FLIGHT—NEGOTIATIONS WITH MARGARET—RETURN—EDWARD QUILTS ENGLAND.

A.D.		page
1469.	Warwick's conspiracies	254
	Robin of Redesdale's insurrection	ib.
	b 2	

C O N T E N T S.

A.D.		page
	Battle of Hedgecote Field - - - - -	256
	King taken prisoner near Coventry - - - - -	257
	The king escapes - - - - -	258
	----- is reconciled to Warwick - - - - -	ib.
	Battle of Lose-coat Field, March 12 - - - - -	259
	Warwick resumes hostilities - - - - -	ib.
	King nearly a prisoner again - - - - -	260
	Warwick and Clarence fly - - - - -	ib.
	----- negotiation with queen Margaret - - - - -	261
	Edward's delusive confidence - - - - -	263
1470.	Letters of Warwick and Clarence - - - - -	267
	Edward's army revolts - - - - -	270
	He flies to the coast, and to Holland - - - - -	271

C H A P. III.

RESTORATION OF HENRY VI.—RE-LANDING AND PROGRESS
OF EDWARD.

A.D.		page
	Warwick reaches London - - - - -	272
	Henry re-enthroned - - - - -	ib.
	Edward solicits Burgundy's aid - - - - -	274
1471.	----- sails from Holland, March 4 - - - - -	278
	----- lands in England - - - - -	280
	----- reaches York - - - - -	283
	----- passes to Nottingham - - - - -	285
	Clarence joins him - - - - -	290
	Edward reaches London - - - - -	292

C H A P. IV.

RESTORATION OF EDWARD IV.—BATTLE OF BARNET—QUEEN
MARGARET LANDS—MARCHES OF EACH PARTY—BATTLE
OF TEWKESBURY—FALCONBRIDGE ATTACKS LONDON—KING
HENRY'S DEATH.

A.D.		page
1471.	Edward restored - - - - -	294
	Battle of Barnet, April 14 - - - - -	296
	Landing of queen Margaret - - - - -	301

C O N T E N T S.

xxi

A.D.

	page
Edward watches her movements - - - - -	303
Their plans and marches - - - - -	304
He follows her into Gloucestershire - - - - -	306
Battle of Tewkesbury, 4th May - - - - -	310
Falconbridge attacks London, 12th May - - - - -	315
Edward reaches London, 21st May - - - - -	316
Falconbridge surrenders - - - - -	317
Henry VI. dies, 22d May - - - - -	319
--- not killed by Gloucester - - - - -	ib.

C H A P. V.

DEATH OF CLARENCE—FACTIONS IN EDWARD'S COURT—HIS WARS WITH FRANCE—HIS DEATH AND CHARACTER.

A.D.

	page
1474. Clarence and Gloucester's difference - - - - -	323
1477. Edward arraigns Clarence - - - - -	325
1478. Death of Clarence, 17th Feb. - - - - -	326
Divided state of Edward's court - - - - -	327
His hostilities with France - - - - -	329
1483. Death of Edward IV. April 9 - - - - -	335
His character - - - - -	336
Education of his son - - - - -	341

C H A P. VI.

REIGN OF EDWARD V.

1483. 9 APRIL TO 26 JUNE.

PREJUDICES AGAINST RICHARD III.—REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE NOBILITY OF ENGLAND AT THIS TIME—ITS VARIOUS CLASSES AND CHIEF LEADERS—THEIR RIVAL INTERESTS—THE KNIGHTS OF ENGLAND—THE CLERGY—VIOLENT SPIRIT OF THE COUNTRY.

A.D.

	page
1483. Richard III. in some points misrepresented - - - - -	344
State of the nobility - - - - -	348

A.D.		page
	The Queen's relations	348
	Nobles in official power	351
	Lord Hastings	352
	--- Stanley and Lovel	353
	Duke of Buckingham	354
	Lord Howard	355
	Earl of Oxford	356
	The parties and opposing interests of the great	357
	The knights of England	362
	State of the church	365
	Speech for the opening of a convocation	ib.
	--- complains of the attacks on the church	366
	Attacks on the clergy	ib.
	Violent spirit of the times	369

C H A P. VII.

FIRST ACTS AND DIVISIONS OF THE ROYAL COUNCIL—KING BROUGHT TO LONDON—ARREST OF LORD RIVERS—GLOUCESTER MADE REGENT—FURTHER PARTY CONTESTS—DEATH OF HASTINGS.

A.D.		page
1483.	Funeral of Edward	374
	Debates in council	375
	Gloucester's loyal conduct at York	376
	He meets Rivers at Northampton	378
	Gloucester arrests Rivers	381
	The queen dowager's alarm	385
	Edward V. arrives in London	387
	Speech in his name to Parliament	388
	Richard appointed protector	390
	His dangerous situation	391
	Executors of Edward IV. decline to act	397
	Course chosen by Richard	398
	Situation of Edward V.	401
	Grants to Richard's friends	402
	Edward's coronation announced	404
	Sudden change of the protector's conduct	405

A.D.

	page
The causes considered - - - - -	406
Conduct of Hastings - - - - -	408
His arrest - - - - -	415
Jane Shore's penance - - - - -	418
Duke of York taken to the Tower - - - - -	420
Dr. Shaw's sermon - - - - -	ib.
Buckingham at the Common Council - - - - -	424
Richard claims the crown - - - - -	425

C H A P. VIII.

REIGN OF RICHARD III.

1483—1485.

A.D.

	page
1483. Richard's first measures - - - - -	430
His coronation, 6 July - - - - -	435
His tour through the counties - - - - -	438
His correspondence with Louis XI. - - - - -	439
----- Duke of Burgundy - - - - -	440
Isabella's embassy to him - - - - -	441
His person - - - - -	443
His coronation at York - - - - -	447
His son's expenses - - - - -	449
Conspiracies begin against him - - - - -	452
Report spread of the Princes death - - - - -	453
Richard plans their murder - - - - -	455
Their bodies found in 1674 - - - - -	458
Rewards to the assassins - - - - -	459
Buckingham abandons him - - - - -	485
His motives - - - - -	486
He thinks to take the crown - - - - -	470
Morton urges him to favour Richmond - - - - -	473
Buckingham's insurrection - - - - -	474
He is beheaded, 2 Nov. - - - - -	479
Richmond returns to Vannes - - - - -	482

C H A P. IX.

RICHARD'S EMBASSIES TO BRETAGNE—RICHMOND'S ESCAPE—
 RICHARD'S MENTAL AGITATIONS, AND REPENTANCE—PREPARE-
 PARATIONS TO REPEL INVASION—THE QUEEN'S DAUGHTERS
 AT HIS COURT—HIS SON'S DEATH—RICHMOND'S OPERATIONS
 —DEATH OF QUEEN ANNE.

A.D.

		page
	RICHARD sends Dr. Hutton to Bretagne	483
	RICHMOND's danger	484
	Richard's mental agitations	485
	His repentance	488
1484.	Preparations against invasion	489
	Gunpowder made in England	490
	Queen's daughters at court	494
	Death of Richard's son	496
	Richmond's operations	497
	Death of Queen Anne	501
	Richard's public oath not to marry Elizabeth	505
	His exaction of benevolencies	508
1485.	Richmond lands at Milford Haven	511
	His march thro Wales	512
	Richard taken by surprise	514
	Lord Stanley's hypocrisy	516
	Richard's dreams	520
	Battle of BOSWORTH FIELD, 22 Aug.	523
	Richard falls	527

His character follows in the succeeding volume.

H I S T O R Y
O F
E N G L A N D.

B O O K III.

C H A P. I.

Continuation of the Reign of HENRY VI. until the Congress at Arras.

FROM the death of Henry V. a division existed in the English cabinet, which, at first, took the shape of personal conflict, and seemed to be rather an ambitious dispute between the duke of Gloucester and his uncle the cardinal Winchester, for power and pre-eminence; than what it grew to be, a conflict of two great public interests and feelings, separating at last into hostility, and menacing a perilous collision.

CHAP.
I.
1429.

At the accession of Henry VI. Gloucester, from his affinity to the crown, claimed, as of right, his elder brother being in France, the governance of the land during the king's minority. The house of lords, apparently under the advice of Winchester, directed searches into precedents; and at length, for the sake of peace, avoiding all titles that would confer real power, appointed him to be Protector and Defender.¹ They considered these names to import personal duties of defending the land, but not to convey any legal authority.

¹ Parl. Rolls, vol. 4. p. 326.

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

Thus wisely guarding against the evil of usurpation, the actual government was vested in the council of regency, which has been already noticed ;² and Gloucester, to his personal mortification, but with the approbation of the country, found himself in a state of showy dignity, that was purposely kept distinct from all dangerous power. He acquiesced, tho repiningly; and contemplated Winchester rather as his political watchman than his friendly kinsman; while the bishop, zealous for the young king, his great nephew, and for the interests of his order, and suspicious of Gloucester's unsatisfied and visibly ambitious spirit, became the chief leader in the council, the parliament, and the metropolis, of all that thwarted the duke.³

Protectorate ended,
1429.

In the council of government, the protector had no permanent preponderance; and the decline of his influence appears in the diminution of his salary as protector. This was reduced, year after year, from 8000 marks to 6000, then to 5000, and afterwards to 4000.⁴ But the decisive triumph over him was obtained by Winchester in 1429, when he procured the king's coronation, tho but eight years old, and induced the parliament to declare, that the name of protector should then cease. Gloucester struggled in vain against his deposition; the rival interest prevailed. He made a protest, that his resignation should be no prejudice to the right of his brother the duke of Bedford;⁵ but he was forced to submit to the unpleasing degradation. A council was formed to conduct the government, of which he was permitted to be one; but he was forbidden to promise

² See before.

³ On their public differences, see before.

⁴ Parl. Rolls, v. 4. p. 425.

⁵ Ib. 337.

any suitor more, than that his petition should be seen by the council ; but if he or Bedford should differ from the majority, the subject was only allowed to be deferred, with a nominal tribute of respect, till the next day, and then to be decided by numbers.⁶ Instead of guiding the administration, he was humbled into one of its train.⁷

The king was crowned with the accustomed pomp,⁸ and from this time the cardinal obtained the ascendancy in the cabinet ; and the speech of the archi-

CHAP.
I.
REIGN OF
HENRY VI.
1429.

Henry
crowned at
Westmin-
ster, 6 Nov.
1429.

⁶ Parl. Rolls. v. 4. p. 338.

⁷ The Lords of the Council whose names are to these articles, shew of whom the Regency consisted :

Gloucester,	Earl Warwick,
Winchester,	— Stafford,
Archb. Canterbury,	Lewis Robessart,
Archb. York,	R. Cromwell,
Bish. London.	J. le Scrop,
— Ely,	W. Hungerford, Tr.
— Bath & Wells,	J. Tiptoft. Ib. 344.
Duke of Norfolk,	

⁸ On 6 Nov. 1429. The ancient chronicler commemorates the dainties of the coronation banquet :

1st COURSE:

Frumentie with venison. Viand royal planted losinges of gold.

Boar heads in castles of gold and armed.

Beef with mutton boiled. Capon stewed. Cygnet roasted.

Heron roasted. Great pike or luce.

A red leech, with lions corvin therein.

Custard royal, with a leopard of gold sitting therein and holding a fleur-de-lis.

Fritter of sun fashion, with a fleur-de-lis therein.

A sotiltie of St. Edward, and St. Lewis, armed with their coat armor, holding between them a figure like king Henry; standing also in his coat armor, with a ballad under their feet.

2d COURSE:

Viande black barred with gold.

Jelly, pastie written and noted with Te Deum laudamus.

Pig endored. Crane roasted. Bittern. Conies.

Partridge. Peacock enhakill. Great Breme.

A white leche planted with a red antelope, with a crown about his neck with a chain of gold.

Flampaine powdered with leopards and fleur-de-lis of gold.

A fritter garnished with a leopard's head and two ostrich feathers.

A sotiltie: an emperor and a king arrayed in mantles of garter, Sigismund and Henry V.; and a figure like Henry VI. kneeling before them with a ballad against the Lollards.

BOOK III. **REIGN OF HENRY VI.** episcopal chancellor to the parliament indicated the party which predominated in the government, and the spirit with which it was meant to be conducted. It complained strongly of infidelity, and of the obstinacy of errors and heresies ; it declared, that pertinacity and perversity menaced ; that unbelief and error were shooting strongly forth ; and that heresies were multiplying in England in an unusual degree.⁹ The cardinal's prevailing influence, or that of the church, which he headed, was manifested by an enactment, that altho' no one who had been raised to the cardinal dignity had, after that, remained counsellor to the king, yet that he should be permitted to continue in the cabinet.¹⁰

The house of Lancaster, having been greatly indebted to the clergy for its revolutionary elevation to

3d COURSE :

Quinces in compost.

Blaund sure powdered with quarter foiles gilt.

Venison. Egrettes. Curlewe. Cock and Partridge.

Plover. Quails. Snipes. Great birds. Larks.

Carp. Crabs. Leche of three colors.

A baked meat like a shield quartered red and white, set with lozenges gilt and flowers of borage.

A fritter crisped

A sotilitie of our Lady sitting with her child in her lap, and holding a crown in her hand ; St. George and St. Denis kneeling on either side, presenting to her king Henry with a ballad in his hand. Fab. 419.

⁹ Ib. p. 335.

¹⁰ Parl. Rolls, v. 4, p. 338. The signatures to two orders of the Regency in 1430, shew how much the clergy preponderated in the cabinet.

25 Feb. 1430 :

H. Gloucester,
H. Canterbury,
J. York, Chancellor,
W. London,

P. Ely,
J. Bath and Wells,
J. Duke Norfolk;
R. E. Warwick,
Cromwell. Rym. 450.

1 March 1430 :

Gloucester,
Canterb.
York, Chanc.
London,

Bath and Wells,
Huntingdon,
Hungerford, Treasurer.

Ib. 451.

the throne, had, under Henry IV. the founder of its royal dynasty, and still more under Henry V. distinguished itself for its severe hostility to that reforming spirit, which, from the reign of Edward I. had been annoying and menacing the ecclesiastical establishments. This conflict will be described in some subsequent pages; but it may be here remarked, that a part of all classes of the people had now become desirous of important reformations in the church. Hence the more the Lancastrian princes identified themselves with all that was objected to in the sacerdotal system, the greater opposition to their administration, began to pervade every rank of English society. The violence used to repress lollardy only deepened and extended the spirit of innovation, and the conviction of its necessity; and the more firmly the government upheld the church, the more rapidly the public discontent extended itself to both. The sympathies of the heart, as persecution increased, began to convert heresy into disloyalty; and a discerning eye might have seen, at the time of Henry the Sixth's accession, many prognostics of that political explosion which shook him from the throne; and which a disinterested sagacity, applying its healing counsels, and disarming compromises with timely prudence, might have abated or prevented.

But no parties become dangerous till they can find leaders distinguished for rank or popularity; and as none such arose in the first part of this reign, the new feelings and opinions seemed but the heresies of individuals, offensive to the church, yet not injurious to the state. But the church, being identified with the state under the Lancastrian dynasty, and representing the hostile criticisms, the administration,

CHAP.
I.
REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

BOOK III. which the cardinal, with the prelate of York, took the lead, reproached and resisted all innovations; and, adopting an ecclesiastical feeling and tendency, became pledged into an increasing hostility against the new religious spirit, the desired reformation, and the wanted improvement of the day. The great laity were not satisfied with these measures; they were excluded by the cabinet churchmen, from all important councils; and such indications of their dissatisfaction appeared, that one of the articles made by the council lords was pointed against the turbulent retainers of the nobility, mentioning them with the most obnoxious epithets.¹¹

The French council of government at Paris recommended, after the reverses produced by the Maid of Orleans, that Henry should be crowned in person, the king of France.¹² It being determined by the regency that this should be done, the cardinal consented to accompany him, “and do the good he may, if so be that the lords and captains, and others that go at this time also over with the king, will be of good rule and governance, and eschew divisions, and taking parties one against another, by dissension, or by their own authority; or else he protested he would come home, and report the cause of his departing;”¹³ a condition which implies the great lay opposition which he was encountering.

Henry lands in
France,
1430, 23d
April.

On St. George's day, Henry VI. landed at Calais,¹⁴

¹¹ ‘No lord shall maintain pillours, robbours, oppressours of the people, mansleers, felons, outlawes, ravishers, unlawful hunters, or other misdoers.’ Parl. 4. 334. The subsequent arraignment of Winchester by Gloucester, complains strongly of him, and the archbishop’s usurping the command of the administration. See the next chapter.

¹² Rymer Fœd. 10. p. 432.

¹³ Ib. p. 456.

¹⁴ Monstr. 348. Fab. 420.

DURING THE MIDDLE AGES.

7

nine years old, to receive, what proved to be the unserviceable, honor of his French coronation. Gloucester was made the keeper of the kingdom, and the king's lieutenant of England in his absence.¹⁵ The English government wished his visit to France to be attended with all the splendor and efficacy of a powerful military force; but the exploits of the Maiden had so unnerved the minds of the English gentry, that it was found necessary at Canterbury, on the 3d of May, from the fewness of the succors that arrived, to issue a royal proclamation, complaining that those captains and soldiers, who had been retained to attend the king, were making great delay, to his peril; and were tergiversating, from the terror of the Maiden's enchantments. It commanded them to assemble immediately at Sandwich and Dover, in order to be conveyed to France.¹⁶

CHAP.
I.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

But so inefficacious were menaces or intreaties, during the mental influence of this superstitious panic, that Henry continued at Calais, without advancing farther. He had remained there a month, when the unexpected news arrived, that the all-dreaded Maiden was captured at Compeigne, on the 23d of May. But, altho a prisoner, this poor girl, not yet nineteen, still so much alarmed our self-tormenting countrymen, that even above six months afterwards, the duke of Gloucester, on the 12th of December, was compelled to address letters patent to the sheriffs of the southern counties, and of London, commanding them to arrest the soldiers whom the "terrifyings" of the Pucelle had actuated

¹⁵ The grant is dated 20 April 1430. Rymer, p. 458.¹⁶ Rym. p. 459.

BOOK III. to abandon their duties.¹⁷ It was not until November that Henry ventured to Paris ; and on the next month, to be crowned.

**REIGN OF
HENRY VI.**

His entrance into
Paris, and
coronation,
17th Dec.
1430.

His entry into the French metropolis was picturesque and stately, according to the taste of the day. The provost and burghers of Paris met him, half way between that city and St. Denis, in their crimson satin doublets and blue hoods, with many inhabitants in scarlet. Persons armed, on horseback, representing the nine ancient worthies, saluted him ; and the lords of the French parliament followed them, in flowing robes of vermillion. On his entering at the gate of St. Denis, three large crimson hearts, typical of the affections of the metropolis, were presented to him ; and as he handled them, out of the first flew two doves ; from the second, small birds sprang up about him, to startle and amuse his little majesty ; and the third disclosed violets and flowers, which were thrown over the lords who accompanied him. An azure canopy, sprinkled with fleurs-de-lis, was carried over him thro the city. At a little bridge appeared a small forest, with three savages struggling with a woman in it, till he passed. A fountain of hippocras wine, and three mermaids swimming in it, were the next delighting spectacles ; and beyond them, pageants, acting in dumb show, the nativity, the adoration of the magi, the massacre of the innocents, and an aged sower, scattering his good seed, claimed the favoring attention ; but the legendary history of St. Denis, over his gate, was most admired by the English. The next street was turned into a forest. Dogs and huntsmen chased a stag, and as the king approached, the well-taught

¹⁷ ‘Quos terricula menta puellæ animaverant.’ Rym. p. 472.

animal took refuge under the royal horse, and his life was saved.¹⁸

I.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

On the 17th of December, the ceremony of the coronation was performed in the church of Notre Dame, more in the English than French manner. During the dinner, four pageants were introduced : the Virgin Mary, with an infant king crowned by her side ; a great fleur-de-lis, surmounted with a crown of gold ; a lady and a peacock ; and a lady with a swan ; while various instruments performed the best music they knew. A gallant tournament was held the next day, with prizes for the best tilters ; and these festivities, more grateful to the fancy of our ancestors than our own, being over, Henry, after a few days, returned to Rouen, to pass his Christmas ;¹⁹ and afterwards remained some time at Calais. The events of the war gave no great splendor to the royal solemnity he had been celebrating. The famous Brabazan, in this month, attacked and defeated an united army of English and Burgundians, near Chalons ;²⁰ but if he obtained this success, he was afterwards defeated and taken prisoner, at Bar, by the duke of Burgundy.²¹

¹⁸ 7 Monstrelet, 45-8. Hall remarks on the disturbance given to this festivity by Winchester's ambition. As he "would have no man to him equal, he commanded the duke of Bedford to leave off the name of regent, during the time the king was in France. The duke took such a secret displeasure with this doing, that he never after favored the cardinal, but repugned and disdained at all things, that he did, or devised." p. 161, 2.

¹⁹ 7 Monst. 50, 1. Fab. 422, 3. A French knight, on 3 February, made a bold attempt to take Rouen by surprise. Mon. p. 59. But this was after the king had left it for Calais. In this last town, he remained a season before he embarked for England ; and he landed at Dover, 9 February. Fab. 423. So that he could not have been at Rouen on the 3d.

²⁰ A servant of a brother of La-Hire, that was in the battle, described it to Jean Chartier as a complete victory over the English, and he so states it in his History of Cha. VII. 3 Charm. 173-6. See Fab. 421.

²¹ Fab. 422. For whose ransom (with another captain) the duke had

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.Henry re-
turns to
England,
9 Feb.
1431.

Landing at Dover, the king, still a child, moved gradually to the metropolis. At Barham Downs, the gentlemen of Kent met him in red hoods, and accompanied him to Blackheath. There the lord mayor and corporation received him; the citizens, clad in white, with the insignia of their trades embroidered on their sleeves, and the aldermen in scarlet. All these rode before him to London bridge, where a mighty giant was standing with his sword ready drawn, and his speech ready written, defying the king's enemies. At the drawbridge, beyond the first gate, was seen a goodly tower, richly apparelled in silk and cloth of arras, out of which suddenly emerged three ladies, in gold and silk, with coronets on their heads, to assure Henry, in tolerable rhyme, that they were dames Nature, Grace, and Fortune, and that they came to give him all their gifts. Seven virgins in white stood on their right hand, in bawdricks of blue; and seven more on their left, in garments powdered with stars of gold. The first seven presented him with (at least the words of) sapience, intelligence, good counsel, strength, cunning, pity, and dread of God; the others gave him the seven gifts of grace, in their best verses,²² when all saluting him, began a roundelay, with what the old admiring chronicler is pleased to call “an

yelden to hym the vale of Cassile in Flanders.’ Fab. 422. Saintrailles had before fallen at Beale Mount, in a battle against the earl of Arundel. Ib.

²² They were:

‘ God thee endowe with crowne of glorie;
And with the sceptre of clenenesse and pitie:
And with a swerde of might and victorie;
And with a mantell of prudence clad thou bee:
A shield of faith, for to defende thee.
An helme of health, wrought to thyne encrease,
Girte with a girdell, of love and parfite peace.’

Fab. 424.

heavenly melody and song."²³ Softly he rode on, till he was stopped at Cornhill by a curious tabernacle, in which dame Sapience was seen, with her pupils studying about her, Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric, Music, Arithmetic, Geometry, and Astronomy. On the conduit at Cornhill, he beheld a child of wonderful beauty, dressed like a king, accompanied by lady Mercy and lady Truth. Before this imaged sovereign were two judges, and eight serjeants of the coif. Henry heard dame Cleanliness address him, and rode on at a quicker pace to the conduit at Cheap. There flowed the wells of Mercy, Grace, and Pity, with a lady at each, who rewarded every one that asked for a taste of these virtues, with a draught of good wine. Verdant trees, bearing oranges, almonds, olives, pomegranates, dates, quinces, peaches, and many other fruits, adorned this spot, which was meant to represent paradise. Two patriarchs here prayed and preached to him in verse; and the shows and lectures closed at St. Paul's gate with a pageantry, which, in attempting its highest sublimity, became little else than puerile impiety. What was meant to be a celestial throne, with the Trinity upon it, surrounded by angels playing and singing upon all instruments of music then in use, was there exhibited; from which two stanzas were addressed to the king, as if from the mouth of the paternal Deity. The absurdities of human

CHAP.
L

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

²³ " Soveraigne lord ! welcome to our citie !
Welcyme our joy ! and our hertes pleasaunce !
Welcome our gladnesse ! welcome our suffisaunce !
Welcome ! welcome ! right welcome mought ye bee !
Singyng before thy royal majesty,
We say with heart, withouten variance,
Soveraigne Lorde ! now welcome out of France !"

Fab. 424.

BOOK III. pomp, flattery, and irreverent fancy, to a boy of ten years old, could go no higher; and he was perhaps happy, after so much compliment and lecturing, to be here conveyed into St. Paul's, to have a little rest, during its service, before he was conducted, in further state, to his palace.²⁴ There is a nothingness in pomp, when reason recalls it to our quiet recollection, which surprises us that we could have enjoyed it; and yet we crowd to gaze at it, and to contribute to it, as if it merited our applause, and were an useful element of human felicity. It is manhood amusing itself with the drama and puppets of the child.

The second ballad of the coronation dinner was directed to applaud the emperor Sigismund and Henry V. for their persecutions of heresy;²⁵ and it was soon followed by the burning of a heretic,²⁶ and, in the next year, another.²⁷ During the administration in which the cardinal and his friends predominated, these arrests, imprisonments, and burnings, were continued.²⁸ The Pope called vigorously for

²⁴ Fab. 423-7.

²⁵ Against iniscreantes, the emperor Sigismunde
Hath shewed his might, which is imperiall :
And Henry the fiste, a noble knight, was founde
For Christe his cause in actes martiall ;
Cherished the church ; to Lollers gave a fall ;
Giving example to kynges that succede,
And to their braunche here, in especiall,
While he doeth reigne, to love God and drede. Fab. 420.

Sigismund was the emperor who had sanctioned the burning of Huss; and Henry V. had sacrificed his friend Oldcastle to the papal church, and had that kind of heart which could let him wait, and see a Lollard perish in the flames. The selection of two such characters for a coronation dinner was meant to be a threatening sermon to all present.

²⁶ 'In the whiche pastyme, that is to meane, the 23 daie of January an heretike was brent in Smithfelde.' Fab. 421.

²⁷ Sir Thomas Bagley, vicar of Mauder in Essex, degraded and burnt in Smithfield. Fab. 422.

²⁸ See 1 Wilkins' Concil. 433-515, and the references on this subject hereafter.

a crusade against the Bohemian reformers,²⁰ and the cardinal ostentatiously affected to begin it; but how easily he abandoned his own attempt, to favor other purposes, has been already noticed.²¹ To avert the papal enmity at this mutation of purpose, it was declared, under the sign manual, that as it was not the king's intention to restrain his subjects from going to Bohemia in displeasure or contempt of the Pope, security would be given for the repayment of the whole sum, to which the wages of this army should amount.²¹

The severities of the ecclesiastical statesmen, only increased the number and the activity of their haters and opponents. No pretext or power can reconcile man to persecution. The free-thinking individual sees in the violence, but new evidence of its injustice; and derives from his own magnanimity of resistance, and from his belief of a still superior approbation, a consolation for his sufferings which death can neither end nor take away. Persecution may procrastinate what it dislikes, but ensures its occurrence. It soon replaces the individuals it removes. It either defeats its own purposes, or makes their attainment the punishment of its supporters. It is used, less from a dependance upon its efficacy, than because it gratifies that love of vengeance, which accompanies the irritation of endangered interests. Few own or applaud the vindictive feelings they obey. These rise gradually in the soul, till the natural sympathy that would prospectively abhor them, is destroyed by their indulgence; and hence, even

²⁰ In 1428, the Pope had issued a bull complaining of the *torrents* of heretics in Bohemia. J. Wilk. Con. 492. And his nuncio stated this fact in the council of the prelates at Canterbury. Ib. p. 493. Martin V. issued a bull to extirpate them, and to collect money for this purpose. Ib. 511.

²¹ See before.

²¹ Rymer, 10. p. 425.

CHAP.
I.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

polished and otherwise virtuous minds, have shewn themselves to be susceptible of this brutal degradation. Violence has often driven heresy into rebellion, and made both seem virtues.

This was experienced in England about Easter 1430. Notwithstanding the imprisonments and executed sentences of the establishment, the heretical critics were, this year, roused to such activity, as to diffuse their adherents into various parts, exhorting the people to rise against the cloistered bodies and destroy their edifices. At Abingdon, they burst into actual insurrection, chose a captain and attacked the monastery.²² The duke of Gloucester was directed by the regency to suppress them, and his military powers soon dispersed them, hanged their leader, and imprisoned many.²³ It was thought necessary to place their chieftain's head on London bridge. Similar insurgents or co-operators were executed in other counties.²⁴ The angry dispositions that were conspiring for the same objects, were intimidated for the moment; but the indignant spirit that felt itself oppressed, took its fatal revenge at a future opportunity.

The cardinal, and Kempe the archbishop of York, continued their preponderance in the cabinet. The

²² Walsingham in his MS. History, says, ‘ Incipit antiqua heresis, sub modo in cordibus multorum fautorum absconsa, in palam ascedere; et suos nuncios, dispersim in diversa loca destinare, exhortando plebem, primo, in ecclesiasticas personas iussurgere, et loca sua, licet consecrata, absque remedio, penitus de terra delere.’ Sloane MS. 1776. Hall says, that two of their articles were, that priests should have no possessions; and that all things, by the order of charity, among christian people, should be in common. p. 166.

²³ Fabian says of their leader, ‘ he confessed to have wrought much sorrowe against priestes, so that he would have made their heads as cheap as sheeps' heads,—‘ and the same season was taken many of his complices, which were sent unto divers prisons.’ p. 422.

²⁴ ‘ The other of his fautours were put in execution in divers places and countries, to the terror of others.’ Fab. 422.

speeches delivered for the crown to Parliament, in the two following years, display the government's desire, or determination for ecclesiastical severities under their influence, and betray the ill effects it was working in the country. During the chancellor's illness in 1431, Dr. Lyndewode complained, that peace and unity were broken by whisperers and double tongues disseminating, daily, false and idle things; by oppressors of the poor, and by maintainers of litigation; that great evils were accruing to churchmen and to the king's lieges, and that many more were to be dreaded, if no remedy were applied. Parliament had therefore been called to obviate these inconveniences, to cherish unity, and to punish all who were impugning it.²⁵ This unity was a tranquil submission both to church and state. But in the next year, the new chancellor, the bishop of Bath and Wells, declaimed in louder terms against the unbelieving; against those who censured and reviled against the divine law; who denied the faith; despised the sacraments, and labored to destroy the ministers of God and the church. He declared that enemies were besieging them with ambuses on all sides, and would grievously disturb both the king and the kingdom.²⁶

The commons now began to exhibit the popular feeling, by thwarting the government, and dissenting from the measures of the lords. Gloucester, excluded from all weight in the cabinet, and sympathising with the ancient nobility, on their neglect by the government, became more favorable to the wishes of the discontented. His love of literature

CHAP.
I.
REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

²⁵ Parl. Rolls, 4, p. 367.

²⁶ Ib. 388.

**BOOK
III.**
**REIGN OF
HENRY VI.**

made him the Mæcenas of the day; and to be the patron and reader of the productions of the emerging mind of the country, necessarily liberalized and animated his own. What reason and knowledge might have been insufficient to have completed, his personal resentment against Winchester and his ministry supplied. To reform the church, was to humble his opponent; to resist the abuses of government, was to lessen that rival's power. Hence he came publicly forward this year, in answer to the chancellor's representations, to state that parliament would be more effectual, if the lords spiritual and temporal could be unanimous and concordant with the commons.²⁷

This was obviously a recommendation to the upper house to concur with the measures of the other. He went on to assert, that from his birth he was entitled to be the principal counsellor of the king, and yet had submitted to act only by the advice and assent of the rest of the council. He therefore called upon the peers to give him their assistance.²⁸ The lords cautiously answered, that they would concur with him, when he specially requested it, so far as from reverence to God (that is to the church) and the advantage of the king and kingdom they should be able.²⁹ The cardinal felt this to be a public arraignment of his administration, and soon appeared personally in parliament to repel the attack. He said, that by the king's licence obtained at Calais, he was going to the Roman court; but while in Flanders, had heard that he had been accused of treason in England; and anxious to keep his fame unhurt more than his earthly goods, he had returned to meet the

²⁷ Parl. Rolls, p. 389.

²⁸ Ib.

²⁹ Ib.

charge, which he declared that he was ready fully to answer.⁴⁰ A deliberation ensued, at the end of which he was assured that no one had accused him of treason, and that the king considered him to be faithful. His plate and jewels had been arrested at Sandwich, as the royal property. He agreed to give 6000*l.* for their release, on the condition that it should be returned to him, if within six years the king's title to the effects should not be proved. An attempt having been made to tax the church, he procured that measure to be deferred on allegations of its poverty, and undertaking to lend the exchequer 6000*l.* more.⁴¹

CHAP.
I.
REIGN OF
HENRY VI..

A council at Basle having been called as the successor or substitute for that of Constance, many English prelates this year applied for the king's leave to attend it. But as they were chiefly the friends of the cardinal, and as he himself was to be of the number,⁴² we may infer that their object was not favorable to religious liberty. The large sum which he was permitted to carry with him 'without search,' imply the uses to which it was intended to be subservient.⁴³

In 1433, the disapprobation of the measures of the cardinal's administration, became so visible, that the duke of Bedford was requested by the commons to stay in England and take the lead of the government. He acquiesced, but desired to know what

⁴⁰ Parl. Rolls, p. 390.

⁴¹ Ib. 392.

⁴² Among others, besides the cardinal, were the bishop of Rochester, as the king's ambassador; the archbishop of York; the bishops of Salisbury, London, Bangor, and Carlisle; the abbots of Glastonbury and St. Albans, and the dean of Bourdeaux. 10 Rym. 531-550.

⁴³ This was 20,000*l.* while York was to take out but 2000*l.*; Salisbury and London 1000*l.*; Carlisle 550*l.*; the abbot Glast. 550*l.*; St. Albans 400*l.*; Bangor 400 marcs, and the dean 120*l.* Rym. ib.

BOOK III. salary would be assigned. A general silence prevailed. Hearing no answer, he mentioned the allowances which his brother had received, but declared that he should be content with 1000*l.* a year, in England.⁴⁴ This liberal conduct could only meet applause; but in the same parliament, a fact, boding ill to the future peace of the country, was announced by the treasurer, Ralph Cromwell, in his petition, which stated that the revenues of government fell short of its expenses by 35,000*l.* a year; a truth that neither lords nor commons could credit, and therefore he prayed them to inspect his accounts.⁴⁵

This unwelcome circumstance was accompanied with an earnest representation from this minister, to the king in parliament, that having not long before, by the advice of Gloucester and Bedford, been appointed treasurer of England, he had exhibited how greatly the crown was then indebted to the people; how inadequate the revenues of the land were to the charges, and that the debt must increase. Daily warrants for payments were brought unto him, by lords and others, more than equal to the whole revenues, if they had not been assigned before. But the truth was, that all the income had become anticipated, and appropriated for the next two years. If he paid any new warrant, he must leave the royal household, chamber, wardrobe, and works, unserved; and yet, if he refused to discharge them, he incurred great indignation from the lords, and great slander and enmity of other people.⁴⁶ Creditors to the amount of 100,000*l.* are mentioned in

⁴⁴ Parl. Rolls, 4. p. 423-5.

⁴⁵ P. Rolls, p. 432. A curious account of the revenues and expenditure follows in the parliamentary record, 432-6.

⁴⁶ R. Parl. 439.

two following years;⁴⁷ and in 1442, their further debt is stated at double this amount.⁴⁸ So that financial deficiencies became one of the causes of evil in this disturbed reign. The crown borrowed and was unable to repay,⁴⁹ and could not satisfy the ordinary charges of the government; new taxes were necessarily imposed, and the public murmured at the unusual burthen.

CHAP.
I.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

The question which, next to the resisting all religious reformation, was most dangerous to the popularity of the crown, the stability of the administration, and the peace of the country, was now arising, and became every year more necessary to be decided, yet more difficult and disquieting. Should the war with France be prosecuted or discontinued? Peace was the best boon for both countries; but France, in the triumphant attitude it had acquired, would concede no terms that would satisfy the pride of the English nation, or the ambition and personal interests of the nobility and gentry, who were engaged in carrying on the war. It had been long the policy of the cardinal to terminate hostilities; for they checked his power, occasioned demands to be made on the property of the clergy, and kept the sword in the hands of the great laity, whom he wished to reduce. Hence it had been represented in 1430, that it was a great charge to the land, and oppression to

⁴⁷ As in 1435, and in 1437. See before.

⁴⁸ P. Rolls, v. 5, p. 39.

⁴⁹ Thus in the eighth year of the reign 50,000*l.* was borrowed, of which the mayor and commonalty of London lent 6,666*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* P. Rolls, v. 4, p. 418. At another time, in 1433, the merchants of the staple at Calais, lent 2,918*l.* 12*s.* 10*d.* to be repaid from the customs. p. 474. In 1435, three individuals advanced 8000 marks, of which 5000 were to be repaid from the rent of the duke of Bedford, then deceased, 1000 from the duchy of Cornwall, and 2000 from the king's treasury. Ib. 485.

BOOK III.

REIGN OF HENRY VI.

the people, to keep up the great multitude of walled towns and castles that were in our possession in Normandy and France ; and the king, with his council, were empowered to dismantle all such as they should deem “unbehoveful, perilous, or harmful to be kept, or to stand.”⁵⁰ In the next year, when the Pope sent cardinals, and Spain and Scotland ambassadors, to mediate a peace between the two countries, Winchester was appointed, with Bedford, and Gloucester, to treat for it.⁵¹ That the cardinal had long labored to effect a treaty, was stated in December 1432, and new commissioners were empowered to negotiate.⁵² The council of Basle recommended it. The duke of Orleans, still a prisoner in England, was employed to procure it ;⁵³ and in 1435, the archbishop of York and the earl of Suffolk went to France with the same object.⁵⁴ But the main difficulty continually remained. The English government could not, with safety to itself, conclude that peace which the French would consent to. The conquest of France had become a disappearing rainbow, but it had been too brilliant an object for its temporary vision to be forgotten, or for the hope of its return, to be relinquished. It still remained in the imagination of the country as a matter of right and certainty, under an able administration. Bedford saw the fever that was diseasing the public mind on this subject, and endeavored in parliament to vindicate himself from the angry criticism that clamored round him.⁵⁵ The cardinal dared not accomplish his own wishes. He settled no peace ;

⁵⁰ Roll. Parl. v. 5. p. 417.

⁵² Rym. 10. p. 510.

⁵¹ Ibid. v. 4. p. 371.

⁵³ Ibid. p. 561-4.

⁵⁴ Rym. p. 613.

⁵⁵ Parl. 5. 435. See his statement here, of his campaigns in France.

but he adopted the policy of making the war linger as faintly as possible, that the popular expectations might gradually abate by time, reverses, and the absence of all exciting successes. Hence no more supplies were sent than sufficed to feed the war, without actually abandoning it; and the consequence was, that every commander complained of want of means, and called in vain for reinforcements. Warwick, York and Somerset, successively, after Bedford's death, were made governors of France; but with no other result than to see the French king gain perpetually new advantages, and to find themselves driven into Normandy, and not able to maintain that province. In 1439, the chancellor stated to the parliament, that Burgundy having, without any consultation with England, appointed a congress at Arras to treat, ambassadors from London had attended it, but only to find France so zealous for war, that as the Burgundians had withdrawn from it, the king of England must either lay down his title of king of France, or defend it in Normandy.⁵⁶

CHAP.
I.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

⁵⁶ R. Parl. v. 4. p. 481. As Hall's remarks, 'that while France was miserably afflicted by the war, England was not without dolour and trouble, because, daily, Englishmen, as well noble as mean personages, were slain, taken or wounded, and their substance continually exacted and consumed for maintenance of the war,' (p. 165) were strictly true; we may ask, Why was peace unpopular in England? He and Comines give us the true answers; he says too justly 'neither nation would yield or bow, the one to the other: neither yet once hear of abstinence of fighting—so much were their hearts hardened, and so princely were their stomachs.' p. 174. To this pride we may add the benefits derived by some, for Comines tells us, that 'the English lords got great fortunes out of France in their plunder, and in the ransoms of their prisoners.' v. 1. 'That the regency of France was so profitable, that it had yielded Bedford 20,000 crowns a month.' p. 63. 'And that Normandy had, in one year, produced to its governors 950,000 francs.' p. 93.

C H A P. II.

Continuation of the War, and Negotiations for Peace with France. The King's Marriage with Margaret, 1435—1444.

BOOK
III.
1435.
July, Sept.

AT the congress of Arras, the future destinies of Europe stood awhile in suspense. Besides the Burgundian and French ambassadors, the Pope and the council of Basle sent two cardinals as their representatives;¹ and the archbishop of York and lord Suffolk attended it on the part of England,² who were joined, a month afterwards, by the cardinal Winchester.³ These three ministers were the real leaders of the English cabinet. The French made them the important offer, to concede to England the possession of Guienne and Normandy, on the usual homage, which former English sovereigns had done for them, and on Henry's renouncing to Charles VII. the title of the king of France.⁴ If these terms had been accepted, the French kingdom would not have become the formidable state it has since appeared, but have been more like Germany, a sovereignty of great dignity, but, from the independence of its powerful members, of restricted power, more endangered than endangering. The dukedoms of Burgundy, Bretagne, Normandy, and Guienne, would have been so many

¹ On 2 July. Monst. 7. p. 211.

² Ib. 215. Their commission was dated 20 June 1435. 10 Rym. p. 613.

³ He arrived there on 19th August. Ib. 232.

⁴ Monst. 7. p. 233.

French electorates, perpetually confronting and limiting their feudal head ; and connecting with them a great number of small independent seigniories, oftener thwarting than aiding the king who ruled in Paris, and over the rest of France. But the pride and passions of the English nobility, infatuating their imagination, curtailed their foresight, and prevented a just appreciation, both of their own resources and power, and of the increasing means of Charles ; and also made them blind to the interests and feelings of Burgundy, and deaf to his advice and representations, and insensible to the inevitable consequence. On the 6th of September, the professed conditions were rejected, and the English left Arras.⁵

The refusal of these terms was evidence to Burgundy, that England was pursuing objects quite distinct from his interests. It would have been more safe and beneficial to him, that the king of England should be only duke of Normandy, than sovereign of France. In the latter case, he would have had a dangerous master ; in the former, a constant ally. By the acceptance of the offered terms, his dominions would have had the peace they needed ; by their rejection, the continuation of warfare, unless he stopped it, became indefinite. Therefore yielding to the solicitation of the cardinals, he deemed the rupture of the general negotiation to be a sufficient justification to himself, for making a separate treaty with Charles, for his own subjects and dukedom, which soon became an effective auxiliary alliance, that ended all hope of establishing an English sovereign over France. The duke swore, before a cross

CHAP.
II.
REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

Burgun-
dy's peace
with
Charles,
21 Sept.
1435.

⁵ Monst. 7. p. 240.

BOOK III. of gold, that he would forget his father's death, and maintain a perpetual peace with Charles; and the duke of Bourbon and the constable, touching the same cross with their hands, begged pardon, in the king's name, of Burgundy for the deed, who, immediately granted it, as a religious duty.⁶

REIGN OF HENRY VI. Greatly affected by the avowed intentions of Burgundy, and by his foresight of the certain consequences, the duke of Bedford died at Rouen, between the departure of the English embassy and the signature of the Burgundian treaty.⁷ When this political transition was completed, Burgundy sent letters to Henry, explaining his conduct, which the king received with tears of regret and apprehension.⁸ These were not lessened by the tidings, that the duke had united his forces to those of Charles.

Bedford's death, 13th Sept.

This junction turned decisively the scales of war. The English took St. Denis,⁹ but lost several towns in Normandy.¹⁰ Henry implored aid from the Hollanders unavailingly.¹¹ Charles was enabled, in the

⁶ Monst. 7. p. 278. He gives the full treaty, 242-278. By the first article, Charles acknowledged the death of the duke's father to have been iniquitously and treacherously perpetrated, and that if he had been of age to have judged of the consequences, he would have prevented it. The king agreed to deliver up the murderers or to banish them; foundations and endowments were made for masses for his soul; Charles was to pay Burgundy 54,000 golden crowns, and to give up to him several towns and lordships, castles and counties; the duke was to do no homage to the king; and a general oblivion was to take place.

⁷ Fab. 431.

⁸ 7 Monst. 291. His account is, 'the young king Henry was so much hurt at their contents, that his eyes were filled with tears, which ran down his cheeks. The news was soon made public thro London. No one who was well-bred was sparing of the grossest abuse against the duke of Burgundy and his country. Many of the common people collected together, and went to different parts of the town, to search for Flemings, Dutchmen, Brabanters, Picards, Hainaulters, and other foreigners, to use them ill. Several were seized in the heat of their rage, and murdered.' Ib. 292.

⁹ 7 Monst. 280.

¹⁰ 7 Monst. 300.

¹¹ The king's letters to them were dated 14 Dec. 1435. 7 Monst. 310.

next year, to recover Paris, with the assistance of its chief inhabitants, and to expel the English from its walls with disgrace.¹²

CHAP.
II.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

The duke of York assumed the command in Normandy, striving to stem the stream of ill-fortune;¹³ and Burgundy, beginning to act zealously against his ancient and now execrating friends, laid siege to Calais, miscalculating both his own ability and the English prowess. His attack failed;¹⁴ and Gloucester, arriving with a large army, hastily summoned from England, to its succor, he retired with precipitation. The English duke, in return, ravaged Flanders, from resentment, and for plunder;¹⁵ but these movements only cemented the alliance between the new confederates, without endangering either. La-Hire took Soisaôns,¹⁶ while the duke of York regained Fecamp, St. Germain-sur-Cailly, and other towns;¹⁷ and the lords Scales and Talbot, with sir Thomas Kiriell, surprised and defeated, tho with no permanent benefit, the two great champions of France, La-Hire and Poton de Saintrailles.¹⁸ Alternate successes occurred in 1437, when the earl of Warwick superseded York, and in 1438;¹⁹ but the English generals could do little more than painfully maintain their ground, in the provinces which they had refused to take, as the price of peace.

¹² Thus Fabian describes it. The heads of the city confederated to betray it to Charles and expel the English, ‘and as the Englishmen fled or fought by the streets, the women and other feeble persons cast upon them stones and hot liquors, to their great confusion, so that the Englishmen were in passing misery and desolation.’ p. 431. So on delivering up St. Denys, ‘when they should pass upon their journey, they were derided and scorned of the French nation out of all measure.’ p. 432.

¹³ Fab. 432. He was accompanied by earl Salisbury, the father of the famous Warwick. ¹⁴ 7 Monst. 318 and 352.

¹⁵ 7 Monst. 382. He landed there 2 August 1436. Fab. 432.

¹⁶ 7 Monst. 395. ¹⁷ Ib. 397.

¹⁸ 8 Monst. p. 11. ¹⁹ Ib. p. 25. 33. 39. 95, &c.

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

A more serious effort to terminate the murderous warfare between two nations, that had become so equally proud, resentful, and defying, as to make pacification almost impracticable, was attempted in 1439, at a meeting between Calais and Gravelines; and the instructions given by the administration to the ambassadors display curiously the cabinet's perception of the extravagant expectations of the country, and its own sense of their impossibility or absurdity. The envoys were required, first, to demand that Charles should not disturb the king's occupation of France, nor question his title. If this was resisted, they were to offer to purchase acquiescence, by ceding to Charles territories beyond the Loire, to be holden of Henry as chief lord. On the rejection of this, which, in the situation of the English at that time, could be considered only as an arrogant proposal, the ambassadors were to represent, that the wars for the crown of France had now lasted above a century; that in this period, more men had perished in the contest than the population of both kingdoms then amounted to: and that all the world did not contain so many noble princes, knights, squires, and men of feats, as these wars had destroyed. The orators were to add, that it was too great sorrow and horror to think or hear, that so much blood had been shed; that the Christian faith, which might have been dilated thro the world, had, in consequence, greatly decreased; and that either the conflict must be terminated, or one nation must destroy the other. These moral reminiscences, which ought to have occurred to the English mind as strongly at Arras as at this time, were to be followed by a consent, that Charles should enjoy,

unconditionally, all France beyond the Loire, except Guienne and Poitou. If this failed, the negotiators were to ask only, that the king should retain what he should be possessed of on the day of the agreement. Should this moderated offer be declined, their proposal was then to be, that the English should have what their Norman princes had held in their proper right, with Calais, and the adjoining castle of Guyenes; and that Henry should marry the French sovereign's daughter.²⁰ If these terms should be found unattainable, they had private instructions, by which the ultimatum was to be settled. Orleans was to be released;²¹ and full powers were given to the cardinal to conclude a final treaty.²² One of the ambassadors, the archbishop of York, was, in a few months afterwards, made a cardinal.²³

CHAP.
II.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

Diplomatic instructions, with such a wide horizon of demand, and such a contractile power of concession, put the result of the negotiation entirely into the hands, and rested it on the secrecy and fidelity of the ambassadors: and yet these were numerous.²⁴ The treacherous communication of a copy, or intimation of their contents, was certain to frustrate every article but the last, and to impede the granting even of that: and as the Pope was anxious for the pacification, on any terms, and was now

²⁰ Rymer, 10. p. 724-6. These Instructions are dated 21 May 1439.

²¹ Ib. 728. 756.

²² These full powers were dated 25 May 1439, and gave him the real command of the negotiation. Ib. 758.

²³ On 4 Feb. 1440, he had licence to assume the cardinal dignity. Ib. 758.

²⁴ They were:

J. Archbishop of York,
J. Duke of Norfolk,
T. Bishop of Norwich,
T. — St. David's,

Earl Stafford,
— Oxford,
Lord Bourgchier,
— Hungersford,
and others. 1b.

BOOK III. inclining to the interests of France, it was not wise to make his cardinal and former legate, the most confidential negociator for England.

**REIGN OF
HENRY VI.**

It was one of the future accusations against the duke of Suffolk, that he made traitorous communications to Charles, of the councils of the English administration. He might be charged unjustly ; but the envoys were too numerous to secure uncorrupted integrity, or impenetrable secrecy. The probability is, that the cabinet knew that all the terms, but the last, would be rejected ; but that they had to make a parliamentary case, and to sooth the feelings of the country ; and therefore, to evade impeaching charges, however moderate in their own expectations, they were large in their ostensible demands.

The duke of Gloucester protested firmly against the release of Orleans,²⁵ but in vain ; yet, tho' the ministry chose to liberate him for a ransom of 20,000 nobles,²⁶ they could not venture to conclude the

²⁵ On 2 June 1440. See it in old English, in Rymer, 10. p. 764.

²⁶ The convention for his release, for 20,000 English, nobles or 40,000 scuti, is dated 2 July 1440. Rym. 777. He gave his bond for this sum on 2 Nov. Ib. 817. The duke of Bretagne guaranteed it. Ib. 785. And on 12 Nov. he signed, at Gravelines, an acknowledgement that he was liberated. Ib. 829. He had been a prisoner in England from October 1415 to November 1440. His sonnets, for their general taste and elegance, make an era in early French poetry : the following, written on our expulsion from France at this period, is a specimen of his talents, and of the ancient French language at this time, and also gives his perception of the discontented state of the English mind against its government :—

‘ Comment voy je ces Anglois esbays ?
Resjoys toy, franc royaume de France !
On apperçoit que de Dieu sont hays,
Puisqu'il y n'ont plus couraige ne puissance,
Bien pensoint par leur oultreduciance
Toy surmonter, et tenir en servaige ;
Mais à present, Dieu pour toy se combat ;
Et se monstre du tout de ta partie ;
Leur grant orgueil entierement abat ;
Et t'a rendu Guyenne et Normandie.

unpopular peace. Events unfavorable to England occurred during 1439 in the loss of Meaux,²⁷ and in the marriage of the French king's daughter with the duke of Burgundy's son.²⁸ But in the next Lent, Somerset and Talbot made incursions into Picardy;²⁹ and in April, Somerset besieged and took Harfleur.³⁰ Ambassadors from France, England, and Burgundy, again met at Calais, to treat of peace;³¹ but, as the French king increased his demands with his advantages, and began to look forward to the entire expulsion of the English, no accommodation followed. Several towns submitted

CHAP.
II.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

Quant les Anglois as pieça envays ;
Rien n'y valoit ton sens et ta vaillance ;
Lors estores, ainsi que fut Tays,
Pecheresse, qui pour faire penance,
Enclose fut par divine ordonnance :
Ainsi as tu esté en reclusseige,
De desconfort et douleur de couraige :
Et les Anglois menoient leur sabat,
En grans pompes, borbans, et tirannie,
Or a tourné Dieu ton deuil en esbat,
Et t'as rendu Guyenne et Normandie.

N'ont pas Anglois souvent leurs roys trahys ?
Certes ouyl ; tous en ont congoissance.
Et encore le roy de leur pays
Est maintenant en doubtouse balance ;
D'en parler mal, chascun Anglois s'avance ;
Assez monstrent, par leur mauvais langaige,
Que volontiers lui feraient oultraige,
Qui sera roy entr'eulx est grant debat.
Pour ce, France ! que veuls tu que te dye ?
De sa verge Dieu les pugnast et bat ;
Et t'a rendu Guyenne et Normandie.

PRINCE.

Roy des François, gaigné as l'avantage ;
Parfaiz ton jeu comme vaillant et aage.
Maintenant, las, plus belle qu'au rabat,
De ton boneur France Dieu remercie
Fortune en bien avecques toy sembat,
Et t'a rendu Guyenne et Normandie.

MSS. Bib. du Roi, N° 2788. 4 Charm. 325.

²⁷ 8 Monst. 156.

²⁸ Ib. 174.

²⁹ Ib. 181.

³⁰ Ib. 200. 210.

³¹ Ib. 218.

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

to Charles, who, in 1441, besieged Pontoise.²² In July, the duke of York, who had been re-appointed to preside in France, marched with lords Talbot and Scales, and sir Richard Woodville, to relieve it,²³ and exerted himself with a vigor and a skill which obtained several successes.²⁴ The French nobles now urged Charles to make a peace; but his council, extending their views beyond the personal interest of the nobility, to the larger horizon of the national aggrandizement, he withheld their remonstrances.²⁵ In 1442, he directed his forces against Gascony, to the satisfaction of its inhabitants, and with great successes.²⁶ In the next year he invaded Normandy, and relieved Dieppe.²⁷ Somerset opposed him, with some advantages;²⁸ and in 1444, a truce was made between the two long-contending countries,²⁹ which was intended to be the precursor of a permanent peace, tho at the sacrifice of all that England held, or had fought for, or most coveted in France, and on which the calamitous marriage of Margaret was intended to be engrafted. The instructions for this latter negotiation were sent in February 1444:³⁰ and if ever a diplomatic casket was a Pandora's box to any country, that which conveyed the authority for this treaty was so to England, to its sovereign, and to its ancient aristocracy.

The particular intrigues that were pursued in the

²² 8 Monst. 278. 280.

²³ Ib. 287.

²⁴ Ib. 287-296.

²⁵ Ib. 305-331.

²⁶ Ib. 333. 336-342.

²⁷ Ib. 348.

²⁸ Ib. 348. He made some conquests.

²⁹ It was settled by Suffolk, Moleyns and others, to continue to April 1445. 8 Monst. 379. The powers to them, to treat of truce and peace, were dated 11 February 1444. 11 Rym. p. 59-67.

³⁰ They were dated 20 February 1444, and addressed to W. Pole, earl Suffolk, 'great seneschal of our household, our ambassador in France.' 11 Rymer, p. 53.

CHAP.
II.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

royal household, and that were dividing the cabinet, have not been distinctly revealed to us. But they seem to have resembled those, which, in all ages and countries, attend royal minorities. We have seen the king's ninth year made an era of such sufficient capacity as to take from Gloucester his protectorate, because no longer necessary. When Henry was in his 14th year, he was advised by those who thought he was kept too much from public business, and that the council of regency was transacting the affairs of state without him, to demand to be now admitted to his proper participation in them. The ruling cabinet gave him a written answer, expressing high personal compliments, but containing a positive refusal which contradicted them.⁴¹ In his seventeenth year, another disabling document appears, by which, instead of being allowed or encouraged to discharge, more efficiently the duties of his great station, it is expressly declared, that "he shall not more attend to them in his own person, *as oft as he would.*"⁴² This

⁴¹ Their answer, after a commencing protestation that it was not their intent to require any thing prejudicial to the king's dignity, was, that they desired it might be said to him in their behalf, 'that tho God have endowed the king with as great understanding and feeling as ever they saw or knew in any prince or other person of his age, nevertheless, to quit them truly to God, to the king, and to his people, they dare not take upon them to put him in conceit or opinion that he is yet endowed with so great feeling, knowledge, and wisdom, the which must in great part grow of experience; nor with so great foresight and discretion, to separate and chuse, namely, in matters of great weight and difficulty, what is expedient and behovful to him and his people, from what might be prejudicial, perilous and harmful to them. They intimate therefore, that it was not expedient as yet to change the rule and governance, that afore this in his tender age, hath by Parliament been appointed, for the good and surety of his noble person and of this land: they then beseech him, 'that if any such motions be again made to him, apart, in things of great weight and substance, &c. that he will take the advice of his parliament, or of his continual council for the time being.' This was read to the king at Cirencester, 12 Nov. 1434. It is remarkable that the duke of Gloucester did not sign this answer. Rol. Parl. 5. p. 438, from Titus, E 5.

⁴² Rolls Parl. v. 5. p. 438, 9. This curious document appoints an

BOOK III. exclusion at the age of 17, and without any limitation of time, from that active conduct of the government which would have educated his mind to the habits of public business, could only render him unfit and unused, and in time unwilling, to transact it. From these documents, the political incapacity of Henry may be fairly ascribed to his injudicious governors, and too ecclesiastical cabinet. The evidence which their own language gives of his capacity, is also their condemnation; as it proves, that they either flattered, or misdirected him. Both he and his uncle of Gloucester appear to have been kept assiduously in the back ground, by those, who by thus forcibly continuing their own power, and promoting their own interests, undermined their popularity; and with that, the government, to which they gave a partial and excluding bias.⁴³

That cardinal Beaufort, with the aid of his coadjutor, the archbishop of York, had governed the administration to the exclusion of others of the regency council, was the complaint of the duke of Gloucester. In his address to the king against them, he states this to be a matter of public notoriety;⁴⁴ and that the cardinal had of his own

annual salary to each of these ruling counsellors, and provides, ‘that my lord of Gloucester shall not lay in his counter letter.’ Rolls Parl. v. 5. p. 438, 9. It is dated 13 Nov. 1437.

“Gloucester reminded the king, ‘how often tymes I have offered my service to and for the defence of your realme of Fraunce, and duchie of Normandy, where I have been put therefrom, by the labor of the said cardinal, in preferring other after his singular affection, which hath caused great part of the said duchie to be lost.’ See his articles in Hall, 201.

“‘Through your landes it is noysed, that the said cardinal and archbishop had and have the governaunce of you and all your lande, and have also estranged me, your sole uncle; my cosyn of York; my cosyn of Huntingdon, and many other lords of your kin, from having any knowledge of any great matter that might touch your high estate; and of lords spiritual, the archbishop of Canterbury should be your chief counsellor, who is also set aside.’ Art. 4, Hall, p. 198.

authority, released the king of Scotland, and had taken upon himself the royal state : and had appointed the embassies to Arras and Gravelines, the latter for reasons unknown to other lords of the council ; and had given the duke of Orleans his liberty.⁴⁵

Besides these assumptions of power, the cardinal is also charged with pursuing extraordinary and illegal means of amassing wealth;⁴⁶ and the duke declares, "that it had not been possible to the said cardinal to have come into his great riches, but by such means ; for of his church, it might not rise, and inheritance he had none."⁴⁷ Gloucester desired, that these ecclesiastical statesmen might be estranged from the council, "that men may be at their freedom to say what they think of truth :" he added, with the courage of a high spirit, and from a feeling of safety, which he was soon after to experience to be a vain confidence against the lawlessly exerted power of his great antagonist, "I dare speak of my truth. The poor dare not do so."⁴⁸ He dared ; and the immediate attack on his wife, and the subsequent arrest and death of himself at Bury, exhibited the effects of his so daring.

The king received his charges, and "committed the hearing thereof to his council, whereof the most

⁴⁵ Art. 6. 13, 14, 15. p. 199.

⁴⁶ See Art. 5, 6, 7. 9. 19, 20. Hall, p. 199-201. The duke declares, "that as well in England as in France and Normandy, neither office, likelihood, nor captain, may be had without too great a good given to him, whereby great part of all the loss that is lost, they have been the causes of; for who that wold give most, his was the price; not considering the merits, service nor suffisaunce of persons." Art. 22. p. 201. It is improbable that the duke would have made a public charge of this sort, if it had been unfounded. ⁴⁷ Art. 22. p. 201.

⁴⁸ Art. 24. p. 201. As these Articles mention the meetings at Arras and Calais, they must have been presented after the latter, which was in 1439, and before Kempe, who is called archbishop, was made a cardinal, which was before 4 Feb. 1440. See note 23.

BOOK III. part were spiritual persons. So, what for fear, and what for favor, the matter was winked at, and nothing said to it; but, "a fair countenance was made to the duke, as tho no displeasure had been taken, nor no malice borne against him."⁴⁹ The dissimulation was of no long continuance. The revenge taken was extreme.

The coadjutors of the cardinal Beaufort, in his administration, besides the cardinal archbishop of York, who became also chancellor and archbishop of Canterbury, were, Adam Moleyns, who was made keeper of the privy seal and bishop of Chichester; William Pole the earl of Suffolk, the great seneschal of the royal household; lord Say, who became the king's chamberlain, and another prelate, the bishop of Salisbury. These, on the death of Bedford, became the great directors of the English cabinet; and we have one expressive intimation of their mode of government, in the complaint of the commons in the succeeding year, that the sheriffs returned persons to parliament as the members for cities and boroughs, who had not been elected by them.⁵⁰ This arbitrary and unconstitutional mode of procuring a commanding majority of the house of commons, was one of the grievances that produced the civil war.

Of this ministry, the earl of Suffolk became the leading lay-member, and the principal favorite at court;⁵¹ and the two great measures on which he

⁴⁹ Hall, p. 202.

⁵⁰ This petition, presented in 1436, is in the Parliament Rolls, v. 4. p. 511. It prays that cities and boroughs may have the elections free, and that sheriffs return those who were actually chosen, under the penalty of forfeiting 10*l.* 1*b.*

⁵¹ The impeachment against him in 1450, states, that twelve years before, or in 1438, he had been 'the next and prystest of the king's council, and steward of the household.' Parl. Rolls, v. 5. p. 180.

raised the ladder of his ambition, and which became his ruin, were, the marriage of the king with a princess of his own choosing, and the cessation of hostilities with France, on any terms, even to the sacrifice of all the English conquests. So grossly is ambition cheated by its selfish contrivances : but it commonly ruins itself by its egotism. By narrowing its base to its own interests, its superstructure, however elaborate, is never stable ; and it becomes the advantage of all others to overthrow it.

CHAP.
II.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

The lady first selected in 1442, with the concurrence or by the advice of Gloucester, for the queen, was the daughter of the earl Armagnac, by which Gascony and Auvergne would have been secured to the English crown, and thus have founded an important limitation to the power of France on the side of the Pyrenees. But Suffolk counteracted this alliance, to the duke's extreme displeasure,²² and to the political injury of his country ; and the French king, directing his arms successfully on those provinces, the nuptial treaty was annulled, tho' the parties had been affianced. Suffolk, with the approbation of his friends in the cabinet, who saw the personal advantage to themselves, tho' not to the state, of having a queen who should owe her elevation to them, selected Margaret for this high dignity, the daughter of the duke of Anjou, nominal king of Sicily and Jerusalem ; altho' her dowry was but a pleasing person, high spirit, and a resolution to give power to the ministers who procured her marriage. The king's consent was easily obtained,

Marriage
of the
king.

²² Fabian, 440. After mentioning that Suffolk had frustrated this marriage, he adds, 'which kindled a new brand of burning envy between the lord protector and him, and took fire in such wise that it left not, till both parties, with many others, were consumed and slain.' Ib.

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

as he yielded to every persuader, and was desirous of being married. But there was one obstacle, that ought alone to have prevented an upright English statesman from countenancing the measure, if what were then thought to be the interests and the honor of England, were to be the objects of his regard? She was niece to the queen of France, and her father could not venture to consent to the match, without the previous approbation of the French king; and this was hopeless, without such sacrifices as would satisfy his political demands, and terminate the war. Suffolk resolved to be the person who should accomplish what was really irreconcileable, both in rectitude and in prudence. He felt, that the highest gratifications of personal ambition would be his reward, if he succeeded; and to secure to himself the prime ministership of England, he plunged into all the difficulties and dangers of the measure: and he reaped fully all its advantages, and, not less abundantly, all its mischiefs.

He saw the hazards, but he thought his policy could surmount them. Having been appointed, with Adam Moleyns, to treat with France, one of his first precautions was, to obtain a mandate from the king, stating, that the earl, having fears and scruples about the matters of his embassy, the sovereign, from his own entire and peculiar desire for the peace and matrimony, enjoined him to fulfil, without hesitation, the whole of his embassy.⁵³ He caused this document to be sanctioned by Parliament.

His next step was for popular, as well as for parliamentary effect. In the sessions that was opened on the 25th of February 1444, the cardinal arch-

⁵³ Rymer, 11. p. 53.

bishop and chancellor expatiated on the diligent labors of Suffolk, with others, for the glorious marriage with princess Margaret, and for the establishment of peace, or at least for the abstinence of war, for a certain time. The speaker of the house of commons, on a subsequent day; by which time Suffolk had been created a marquis, after dilating on his labors in conserving peace within the kingdom, in repressing riots, in the wars beyond the seas, in treating for peace, in procuring a suspension of hostilities, to the great comfort of the merchants of the country, and in negotiating the royal marriage ; requested, in the name of the commons, that Suffolk's services might be imprinted on the king's heart. The sovereign was instructed to answer, that their prayers were singularly pleasing to him ; and that he would take the marquis into his benign grace and favor.⁵⁴

Lest all these public acts should not be a sufficient indemnity, a message was delivered, in the king's name, to the two houses, notifying, that the sovereign himself had appointed a day in October for the convention of a peace with France, and that none of the lords of his cabinet had moved him to it ; that they had requested him then to declare, that it was his own personal determination, and that they might be for ever discharged and excused, concerning it. An Act was then passed, reciting a former treaty, which bound the king not to make peace without the assent of parliament ; and repealing this restriction.⁵⁵

Thus secured, Suffolk thought that he had taken off from himself all political responsibility ; and he

CHAP.
II.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

⁵⁴ Roll. Par. 5. p. 66-74.

⁵⁵ Ib. p. 103.

BOOK
III.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

proceeded to the conclusion of the marriage. It could be effected only by surrendering to her family, and thereby to the French king, Anjou, Mans, and the comté of Maine. Gloucester resisted this cession, as Maine was the key of Normandy.⁶⁶ His opposition was fruitless. The province was given up. The nuptials were celebrated by proxy at Tours, where the French king then resided ; and the princess was brought by the exulting Suffolk, blind to the awful future, to the shores of her new country.

Margaret's
arrival.
May 1444.

The English received her with a kindness which indicated, that if she had abstained from intermeddling with politics, she might have been popular and beloved. She was married to Henry at Southwike in Hampshire, and was conducted by the chief nobility and gentry, with great state, to London. Their numerous retinues of knights, esquires, and retainers, were in appropriate liveries, with powdered sleeves, some enriched with beaten gold. Gloucester brought 500 of his feudal attendants, in one uniform of splendid apparel. On the 18th of May, the mayor, aldermen, sheriffs, and commonalty attended her at Blackheath, in their red hoods, and brown and blue gowns, and with the conisaunce or flags of their various trades. Pageants and resemblances, from old histories, were exhibited in the city as she passed, “to the great comfort of her, and of such as came with her.” On Sunday, May the 30th, she was crowned at Westminster. Knightly justs were held for three days, in the sanctuary before the abbey ;⁶⁷ and the genius of Lydgate was

⁶⁶ Fab. 441.

⁶⁷ Ibid. 442. On this occasion, lord Stafford was made duke of Buckingham; Warwick, duke of Warwick; Dorset, marquis of Dorset; and Suffolk, marquis of Suffolk. Ib. 441.

roused, or employed, to versify her welcome, and chant her praise.⁵⁹ Poets as lavishly promise felicities, as they ascribe excellencies, to the heroes and heroines of their panegyric; but they are neither good painters, nor true prophets. They can command words, and sometimes feelings, but not events. They talk eloquently of virtues and perfections, but can as little give them to their patronizing favorites, as they seem able, at times, to acquire them for themselves. The inspiration of the bard is not always from Olympus; and in Margaret's case, the sad realities of history falsified, most lamentably, all that was hoped and anticipated, rhymed or foretold. Her presence was not long an angel visitant of joy and peace; but soon, too soon, became a direful figure, leading both her friends and enemies to death, exile, poverty, and wretchedness.⁶⁰

CHAP.
II.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

⁵⁹ Lydgate's verses and pageant on her marriage still remain among his MS. works. Hall says of her, that she 'excelled all other as well in beauty and favor, as in wit and policie; and was of stomach and corage more like to a man, than a woman.' p. 205. His epitome of the effects of her union is an expressive abridgment of the rest of the reign: 'After this spousage, the king's friends fell from him; the lords of his realm fell in division amongst themselves; the commons rebelled against their natural prince; fields were foughten; many thousands slain, and finally, the king deposed, and his son slain, and his queen sent home again, with as much misery and sorrow, as she was received with pomp and triumph.' p. 205.

⁶⁰ The remarks which Dr. Gascoigne, the chancellor of Oxford, about this time, has inserted on this marriage in his *Diction. Theol.* still existing in MS. at Oxford, shew us the angered and disrespectful feelings with which the criticising part of the nation now contemplated that event, and the remarks they made upon it. I quote from the Cotton MSS. Vitel. 156, which contains Dr. James's MS. extracts from Gascoigne:—

'Lately in a kingdom, a certain woman was married to a certain king, and the person who contracted this marriage, by a secret and false compact, alienated a great duchy from this kingdom.'

'England received no advantage with queen Margaret, but the loss of Anjou and Maine, which her husband Henry VI. gave for her, under his great seal, to the king her father.'

'In consequence of losing these provinces, England also lost Normandy, France, and Gascony; Anjou was then lost. The duke of Suffolk betrothed for the king, Margaret, the younger daughter of the

BOOK
III.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

duke of Lorraine, who was called king of Sicily, but had no part of it. Having contracted this marriage, the duke came to England, and procured a large subsidy, and then sailed back to France, to bring Margaret here to be queen. But then the French arrested her, saying, that neither should have a safe conduct from their king to her, and that he should not carry her to England.'

'The duke considering what would beset him in England if he did not get her over, obtained from Henry leave to give up Anjou and Maine to her father Regnier. But immediately after these were surrendered, the French obtained Normandy and France without war or a struggle, from the hands of a few English that were there; and in a short time also Gascony.'

'In another place he adds, 'her father swore to the duke and duchess of Suffolk, that he would efficaciously labor for making the final peace between England and France, if Anjou and Maine were given up to him. The king and council authorized Adam Moleyns, the bishop of Chichester, to give up these provinces, who delivered them to Regnier (her father.) Two dukes and an archbishop formed the council at the Dominican friars, at London, which consented to their concession.' James's MSS. Vitel. 155, 156. The pages referred to in Gascoigne's MS. are 579, 590, 609.

C H A P. III.

*The Deaths of the Duke of Gloucester, and
Cardinal Beaufort.*

A L A R G E dowry of several manors was settled on the queen.¹ Suffolk was raised to the highest rank of English nobility; and several manors and wardships were given to him, to support his ducal dignity. He became the ruling favorite with both king and queen; and he had established a great influence in the court of France, from which, as no benefits were derived by his country, some were inferred, and may be presumed, to have resulted to himself.

CHAP.
III.

But before he could be secure on the summit of his ambition, it was necessary that one political opponent should be removed. Greatness not born to, is suspicious of its own permanence, and alarmed at opposition. It knows itself to have arisen more by chances and contrivances than by merit, and it feels itself to have no natural stability. But even this jealousy seems insufficient to account for an attack on the next heir of the crown. This was a measure so unusually violent, that one of the most extravagant charges against Suffolk afterwards, that he aimed at vesting the succession to the crown in his own family,

¹ Rol. Parl. 5. 118. Three years afterwards another grant occurs, which mentions that the king having assigned her 3,666*l.*, 13*s.* 4*d.* in part of her dower, apportions it to be paid from the customs at Southampton, the duchy of Cornwall, and the exchequer. Ib. p. 132.

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.Duchess
accused.

ceases to be improbable, when we consider his arresting, for the purpose of destroying, the king's uncle, and heir presumptive, the duke of Gloucester.

Before the king's marriage, an attempt was made to vex or degrade the duke, by attacking the duchess with a charge, to us fantastical, but then of great impression; that she was destroying the royal life by witchcraft.* The power of necromancy was at that time believed to be attainable; in that emerging day of knowlege, when the art of transmuting metals into gold and silver, and of making elixirs of immortality, was earnestly pursued, under the sanction of royal patents,[†] the attempt to command nature by sorcery may have been actually studied. When all believed that it was possessed, and many taught that it was to be acquired, some may have assayed to gain those powers above humanity, which numbers, in all ages, haye wished for; but many more persons were slandered with the imputation, from the alarm, malice, and ignorance, of their prejudiced neighborhood. In this reign, the charge was peculiarly malevolent; for there is reason to suppose, that it was made, not unfrequently, on those whose only crime was some of the new religious opinions, which were prosecuted as impious heresy.

The accusation against the duchess was, that, at her request, three clergymen, and an elderly woman, of Eye, had made an image of wax like the king, which they consumed gradually before the fire; that

* A similar charge was made afterwards against the duke of Clarence.

[†] Thus in 1449, in 1452, licences to transmute metals were granted, and in 1456, to make 'that precious medicine which some call the mother of philosophers and the empress medicine; others the inestimable glory; others the fifth essence (quintessence), and others the philosopher's stone and elixir of life.' See these grants in Rym. Fœd. vii. p. 240. 309. 379; and another in 1460, p. 462, &c.

as that figure slowly melted, the king might pine and decay.⁴

It is so extraordinary, that the lady of the first person in the nation, after the king, his only living uncle, and the then next heir to the throne, should be harassed with a charge like this; or that it should be even entertained at all in those days, when it was so dangerous to assail or to slander greatness, that we can have no doubt it was the premeditated act of a powerful party. No mere individual, unconnected with other purposes, would have presumed to make such an imputation, or would have been listened to if he attempted it. The incident is too little detailed for our curiosity to receive full satisfaction; but there are some attendant circumstances that deserve our consideration. The individuals accused as her confederates, were Roger Bolingbroke, a clergyman; Thomas Southwell, a canon of Westminster; and John Hume, the chaplain of the duchess; besides Margery Jourdemayn, a reputed witch.

This Margery Jourdemayn had been apprehended ten years before, together with three other ecclesiastics; Thomas Norfelde, a Dominican friar, living at Worcester; John Asshewell, a friar of the Holy Cross at London; and John Virley, a clergyman, on a charge of sorcery: but the order to arrest Norfelde commanded him to be brought before the royal council, with all his books treating of magic, or any

CHAP.
III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

Former
arrest of
Margery.
1432.

⁴ Fabian, 437. Aburd as these fancies are, yet even the courtier and the learned believed them in queen Elizabeth's days. Bisop Jewell, in an address delivered to the queen against witches, could then say, 'These eyes have seen most evident and manifest marks of their wickedness. Your grace's subjects pine away even unto the death; their color fadeth, their flesh rotteth, their speech is beaumbed; their senses are bereft.'

¹ Aikin's Mem. Eliz. 284. Nor did he speak to unbelieving ears, for a violent act of parliament was made against them.

BOOK
III.
REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

*other suspected matters.*⁵ The latitude of the last expressions, considered with a recollection of the fierce persecution of what was called lollardy, at that time, leads to a belief, that sorcery was not the main imputation. Their commitment to such a place as Windsor castle also implies, that more important objects were connected with their seizure. Whatever was the plan, it seems to have failed; for Margery was released on her husband giving bail for her; and the others, on similar cautionary securities.

Four years after this, an event occurred, that is likely to have put Suffolk into a state of personal hostility with the duchess and her family. She was the daughter of Reynold Cobham, the lord of Stereburgh.⁶ In 1433, the duke of Orleans was committed to the custody of Suffolk, with a daily salary for his maintenance.⁷ But after Bedford's death, this illustrious and profitable prisoner was, in May 1436, taken from Suffolk, and put under the care of sir Reynold Cobham, the father of the duchess, with the same pecuniary benefit.⁸ Her father was descended from that ancestor from whom the lady Cobham came, who had married sir John Oldcastle.⁹ If his new religious opinions had spread to the two branches of the Cobham line, the persecution of the duchess would become more intelligible.

The three ecclesiastics arrested with Margery Jourdemayn, on the charge against the duchess in

⁵ Rym. Fœd. 10. p. 505. On the prosecution of R. Walker in 1419, for sorcery, see 3 Wilk. Conc. 394.

⁶ Wals. MSS. ⁷ This was 14*s. 4d.* a day. Rym. 10. 564.

⁸ Rym. 10. 658.

⁹ Banks' Baronage, v. 1. p. 270, and v. 2. p. 106. 119. Oldcastle took the title of lord Cobham from his wife. Hall, 48.

1443, were not those who had been imprisoned with her in 1432. One of them, Bolingbroke, is described by a contemporary as one of the most famous clerks in all the world, whose fate was exceedingly lamented by many. He was particularly distinguished for his knowledge of astronomy, as well as necromancy.¹⁰ He was accused as the counsellor of the duchess in the magic art.¹¹ The supposition, that a clergyman of his celebrity would conspire with a person of her rank, for such a treasonable purpose, if it were practicable, and for such an absurd one, as with his science he must have known it to have been, is so improbable, that it is more likely that lollardism, and not necromancy, was their actual crime. But the apparent farce was converted into a tragedy, by the sentences on her alleged counsellors. Bolingbroke was exposed to public derision in St. Paul's churchyard, on a high seat, to be seen by all, in a fantastic dress, with waxen images, and things which they called his necromantic instruments. He was then drawn to Tyburn, hung and quartered, and his head was fixed on London bridge.¹² He protested, with his last breath, that he was innocent of the charge.¹³ The next day, Margaret Jourdemayn was burnt in Smithfield.¹⁴ Southwell, the canon of Westminster, died in the Tower the night before he was to have been judged; and Hume, the chaplain of the implicated duchess, received the suspicious bounty of a pardon.¹⁵

Execution
of the
accused.

The powerful persecutors did not venture to make the blow at the duchess so fatal. Whether the public

¹⁰ Will. Wyrcestre, p. 461.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Fabian, 439. Hall, 202.

¹⁴ W. Wyr. Fab.

¹⁵ Fab. 430.

BOOK III. sympathy at transactions so nefarious, or dread of her husband's yet remaining power, mitigated her doom, is not mentioned. She had been imprisoned
REIGN OF HENRY VI. in Leeds castle; but she was sentenced to be brought to London, and to do three times penance. On Thursday, she was placed near the Temple gate, and was made to walk in public disgrace to St. Paul's, with waxen tapers in her hands. On Saturday, she was thus paraded from the Swan in Thames-street to Christchurch; and on the Sunday, from St. Paul's to St. Peter's in Cornhill.¹⁶ She was then committed to a lasting imprisonment; for, after being in other places,¹⁷ we find a warrant, in the October of the next year, for transferring her from Chester castle to Kenilworth.¹⁸

This attack on the duchess could have but one effect on her husband's mind. The church was made the engine to deal the blow; and the heads of the church were the ministers of the country, to whom, with Suffolk, the queen united herself, and with them, and by them, governed the country.¹⁹ To have contributed to end an useless war, may have been Suffolk's wisdom rather than his treachery; but to make his administration and his policy so lucrative to himself, from the repeated grants of honors, manors and property,²⁰ which he accumulated with a rapidity that looked like rapacity, led the nation to

¹⁶ W. Wyr. 460, 1. 2. Lel. Collect. 493.

¹⁷ At first a castle under sir Thomas Stanley. Wyr. 461. And then, according to the Chronicle in Leland, to a prison in the Isle of Man.

¹⁸ Rym. 11. p. 45.

¹⁹ 'Shortly after, all was ruled by the quene and her council, to the great disprofitt of the king and his realm, and to the great inauger and obloquy of the quene.' Fab. 422.

²⁰ See Calend. Rot. Pat. p. 275. 284, 285. 287. Croyl. 521. He had the custody of the duke of Orleans. Rym. 10. 564. And was in the embassies of 1435, 1444, 1445. Rym. Fed. 10. 613; 11. 53. 94.

suppose, that the public good was sacrificed to his private advantage. This want of disinterestedness, which was both imputed and believed, caused that which was judicious, to appear to be sordid; and fixing the general hatred on himself, extended it also to the principles which he espoused and disgraced, and to the government which he directed.

But the general attention became soon absorbed by a violence, which agitated the public sensibility into a personal hatred of the new-made duke, and his ministerial coadjutors; and which roused it to destroy most of them, within a few years afterwards, by one of the greatest and most ungovernable of all evils, a popular insurrection.

That the queen had been urged by her father, not to allow herself and Henry to be kept under, like young wards, but to take upon themselves the government of the kingdom; and that, by her permission and favor, Suffolk and Buckingham, "not unprocured" by the two English cardinals, Winchester and York, conspired to destroy the duke of Gloucester, is asserted by the old chronicler, from divers writers whom he does not specify.²¹ The precise plans and causes of such a wicked confederacy, have not come down to us; but the determined and fatal effects soon appeared.

The ministers issued writs to convene a parliament, at first at Cambridge; but the place was afterwards changed to meet at Bury St. Edmund's, as more fitted for their secret purpose, on the 10th of February.²² With this summons they privately sent a requisition from the crown, for the people of the country to meet there "in their most defensible

²¹ Hall Chr. 209.

²² Rolls Parl. v. 5. 128.

CHAP.
III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

BOOK arms, to give attendance upon the king."²³ This
III. order was obeyed; and the roads about the town
REIGN OF
HENRY VI. were so strictly kept by armed men, both day and
night, that many died of cold and watching.²⁴

1447. The duke of Gloucester, unsuspecting of the plot
Gloucester
arrested. of violence that had been concerted against him,²⁵
attended among the other peers. He had been, in
the preceding year, accused, in open council, of
various articles, which he satisfactorily repelled.²⁶
Such an unavailing accusation may have increased
his animosity and popularity, and endangered his
opponents; and their alarm may have hurried them
into crime. But whatever was their motive, altho'
the calamities which had followed to the throne itself,
by measures of the same sort, in the reigns of the
second Edward and Richard, might have taught
forbearance; yet after opening the session by a moral
and religious speech on peace and good counsel,
from the primate and chancellor,²⁷ the ministry sud-
denly arrested the duke of Gloucester, by the agency
of lord Beaumont, the high constable, accompanied
by the dukes of Somerset and Buckingham. He
was put into custody under a strong guard, and his
thirty-two attendants were also seized, and sent to
different prisons.²⁸ The fewness of these followers
proved his arrest to be a measure unexpected by him-
self, as great men always came to parliament, at-
tended by large retinues, when they apprehended

²³ Fabian, 443.

²⁴ Stowe's Chron. 386.

²⁵ 'Nihil dolit conjiciens.' Hist. Croyl. cent. 521.

²⁶ 'The duke, not without great laud and praise, sufficiently answered to all things to him objected.' Hall, 209. This writer had documents before him, on this period, which do not now exist.

²⁷ Rolls Parl. v. 5. p. 128. On 11 Feb. the commons chose their speaker, W. Tresham, who on the Monday following was presented and approved. p. 129.

²⁸ Fab. 444. 2 LeL. 494.

danger. Loud murmurs arose among the people, as the news became circulated ; but the most favorable town for the purpose had been selected ; and to allay the ferment, assertions were spread that he had conspired to kill the king, in order to liberate his duchess. Before any examination or trial occurred, within a few days afterwards, and altho seen safe and well in the preceding evening, he was found dead in his bed, on the morning of the 23d of February.²⁰ His body was exposed to public view, that it might be seen to have no wound ;²¹ as if our national history had not already shewn, that murder might be committed without leaving the marks of personal violence. If he was killed, no crime could be more foolish, and none ever became more pernicious to its inventors ; if his death was the stroke of nature, it could not have occurred under circumstances more suspicious. The friends of the government maintained, that he had died of apoplexy. The nation believed that he had been murdered ; and the political convenience of his death to the administration, their long hostility to him, and his violent arrest and imprisonment, before any accusation, and without any specific charge, were deemed satisfactory evidences of the secret crime. At this distant period, we can only add, that when the ministry

CHAP.
III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

²⁰ Hist. Croyl. 521. W. Wyr. 464. Fab. 444. Hall mentions that some wrote, 'that he was stifled between two feather beds.' p. 209. His sudden death was certain. Its manner such, if violent, as to be undiscoverable by inspection.

²¹ Fab. 444. W. Wyr. mentions his death without comment ; and Whethampstead says, 'that his arrest and close custody threw him into a sickness, which in a few days killed him.' p. 365. But this is not sufficient to prove that his death was not violent. As Suffolk continued in full power for three years, no investigation took place ; but the suspicion and imputation never left him : secret murders can rarely be proved.

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

determined thus to arrest and imprison, on a charge of high treason, a personage who was not only the first nobleman in the kingdom, but also the presumptive heir to the crown ; to whom a large portion of the nation was attached ; and who possessed, in his own dignities and inheritances, a great force of military retainers, they must have deliberately resolved on his destruction. The arrest would have been their own downfall, if it were not followed by his death. Such an act of violence, if he survived it, could never be forgiven, nor, from the circumstances of the country, be long unavenged. Their own safety, and his life, became incompatible after such a measure ; and to have voluntarily placed themselves in this dilemma, implies that his catastrophe, whether anticipated by an apoplexy of nature, or perpetrated by their atrocious order, was in accordance with their deliberate intentions. The public imputed it to their flagitious policy ; and popular vengeance, in no long time afterwards, exacted a dreadful retribution.

Five of the duke's household were sent to London, and sentenced to be drawn, hanged, and quartered, as traitors. They were suspended on the gibbet in the presence of Suffolk, who chose to be at it ; but when near expiring, and after being marked with a knife to be quartered, they were cut down, on his producing the king's pardon.³¹ This theatrical ostentation of almost useless mercy, was cheered by the sudden feelings of the spectators ; but the ancient chronicler adds, what might have been anticipated, “ the grudge and murmur of the people ceased not against the marquis of Suffolk, for the death of the good duke of Gloucester, of whose murder he was

³¹ Fab. 444.

specially suspected."³² That he could gratify himself by personally contemplating the last agonies of the servants of his political rival, and keep the pardon in his pocket till exhausted nature was ceasing her last struggles, announces a cruel insensibility of heart, which makes the imputation of their master's murder less incredible.³³ The same stern animosity appears in the passing an act immediately afterwards, depriving the surviving duchess of her dower,³⁴ tho common policy might have suggested the expediency of affecting at least some sympathy for one, who was now as wretched as she was harmless. These circumstances compel us to recollect, that Suffolk had, three years before, given himself a pecuniary interest in Gloucester's death, by having procured the grant of the county of Pembroke, if the duke should die without male heirs, and of Pembroke, Tenby, and Kilgarron castles, and of some Welsh domains, if he should leave no issue;³⁵ and had, in the year immediately preceding the catastrophe, enriched his nephew at Gloucester's expence and degradation.³⁶

CHAP.
III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

³² Fab. 444.

³³ Their pardon (Rymer, 11. p. 179.) is grounded on four strange reasons: 1. Because God reserves vengeance to himself. 2. Because it was Friday when the king signed it. 3. Because the assumption of the Virgin was near. 4. Because of the many favors which the king had been receiving from God.

³⁴ Rolls Parl. 5. p. 135. This was done so soon after his death as 3 March. Ib.

³⁵ Cal. Rot. Patent. p. 285. This was made one of the articles of his future impeachment. Rolls P. 5. 181. The grant was both to himself and his wife, as most of the grants to him were; a circumstance that indicates much conubial affection. The domestic feelings of husband and parent formed a part of his mixed character.

³⁶ This document is dated 22 Aug. 1446, by which the duke was compelled to abandon those lands and honors in Guienne which were then given to the foreign nobleman who had married Suffolk's niece. Rymer. 11. p. 147. Suffolk had also obtained the wardships of the person and lands of the countess of Warwick, and of the duke of Somerset's daughter.

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.
The cardinal dies.

The public sense of justice was soon after astonished, but gratified, to learn, that Gloucester's bitterest and most ancient antagonist, the cardinal prelate of Winchester, survived him but six weeks.²⁷ The bishop may deserve the panegyric of the monk of Croyland, that he was peculiarly distinguished above all the nobility of England for his probity, wisdom, riches, and glory.²⁸ He could not fail to be affluent, who, besides lucrative dignities, obtained large grants from the crown, and a remission for life of all the tenths and quotas which the rest of the clergy paid, and a release from all fines;²⁹ and who had taken those means of amassing wealth, to which Gloucester alluded, in his last memorial against him. Worldly glory is the usual attendant on so much property and power. That he was an able man, cannot be disputed; and he may have had moral probity in his social transactions: but that he possessed or displayed those christian graces and feelings which it was the duty of a christian bishop to inculcate and exemplify, was hardly possible for one, who lived and died a great statesman; and is not reconcileable

Hall, p. 207. The profit of such wardships we may infer from the fact, that the fine, or sum paid for the duke of York's leave to marry, was 10,000*l.* 4 Parl. Rolls, 465.

²⁷ Cardinal Beaufort died on the 11th April 1447. W. Wyr. 464. And his brother the duke of Exeter on the following August. Ib. Whom he had placed in parliament next to the duke of Gloucester. Rolls Parl. Rymer.

²⁸ Hist. Croyl. 521.

²⁹ Cal. Rot. Patent. 279. 281, 2, 3. Rym. Fœd. 10. p. 681. v. 11. p. 20. He was rich enough to be frequently lending money to the crown: in one year 20,000*l.*; in the next year 10,000*l.*; in another 50,000*l.*; afterwards 6000*l.*, 18,000*l.* and 9000 marcs and 7000 marcs; and to give the king 13,350 marcs for some castles and manors. Cal. Rot. p. 271, 2. 6, 7. 9. 280, 1, besides having leave to take 20,000*l.* to Basie. 10 Rym. 538. And to raise his crusading army. Ib. 419. We see his influence and one source of his wealth in a grant he obtained, on an allegation of unthriftiness in the abbot, of being guardian of the abbey of Battle, with power to take the revenue. MSS. Cleop. E. 3.

with some of his recorded actions, which the most CHAP.
favoring candor can only pity and regret. III.

The character drawn of him by Hall seems to correspond better with his public conduct;⁴⁰ and we owe to this writer an account of his death-bed feelings, which, coming from his own chaplain, may be considered as authentic. As he lay on that pillow from which he was never to rise in this world, he was heard to exclaim, "Why should I die, having so much riches? If the whole realm would save my life, I am able, either by policy to get it, or by riches to buy it. Fie! will not death be hindered? nor will money do nothing? When my nephew of Bedford died, I thought myself half up the wheel; but when I saw mine other nephew of Gloucester deceased, then I thought myself able to be equal with kings; and so thought to increase my treasure, in hope to have worn a triple crown. But I see now the world faileth me; and so I am deceived. I pray you all to pray for me."⁴¹ We have no right to ridicule or condemn the forms or manner in which any individual feels it to be consolatory, or hopes it will be beneficial to him to depart from his present state of being. Many have endeavored to implore mercy and to excite compassion by some act of personal mortification, as their dying spirit became hopeless of its continuance here. The cardinal Beaufort was of this number, and sought comfort on his departing

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.
His death-
bed.

⁴⁰ "More noble of blood, than notable in learning; haut in stomach and high in countenance; rich above measure of all men, and to few, liberal; disdainful to his kin, and dreadful to his lovers; preferring money before friendship; many things beginning, and nothing performing." Hall, p. 210.

⁴¹ "Doctor John Baker, his privy counsellor and his chaplain, wrote, that he, lying on his death-bed, said these words." Hall, p. 210. I have not been able to meet with the MS. of Dr. Baker's work. It would be highly curious, if it could be found.

BOOK III. soul, by having his funeral service performed over him as he lay on his death-bed.⁴² His will expressed both his penitence and his benevolence.⁴³

REIGN OF HENRY VI.

The end of those who were concerned in the arrest, if not in the murder, of the duke of Gloucester, was peculiarly unhappy. Cardinal Beaufort only survived him six weeks. The duke of Somerset, his nephew, in less than twelve months afterwards, committed suicide because that courtly favor waned, which, by his co-operation with its worst measures, he had sought to secure.⁴⁴ The duke of Suffolk perished

⁴² His last moments are thus described by the monk of Croyland, who was present:—‘ While he was languishing in extremis, in his palace at Wolvesey, he had all the ecclesiastics, religious and secular, of the neighboring parts, assembled in his great chamber, and there had his solemn exequies chanted over him, as he lay in bed, with the mass of requiem. In the evening afterwards he had his will read over aloud, publicly before all, and added some corrections and codicils. The next morning it was repeated, and he confirmed it. He then took leave of all, and expired.’ Hist. Croyl. Contin. v. 2. p. 582. Gale Script.

⁴³ He was the son of John of Gaunt, by the lady, whom after the cardinal’s birth, he made his third wife. He studied in part at Aix-la-Chapelle. He was made in 1397, when very young, bishop of Lincoln, and in 1404, bishop of Winchester and chancellor. His will is dated 21 Jan. 1446, and has been printed among the royal and noble wills. p. 311–3. He begins it with a moral recollection that must have been rather his rhetoric, than his feeling, ‘ How transitory, mutable and perishing is this life! I look upon it to be rather as a shadow that soon vanishes, or a spectacle, than a solid duration of days.’ p. 321. His charitable legacies do credit to his feelings. Besides 4000*l.* to the prisoners in Newgate, Ludgate, Fleet, Marshalsea, King’s Bench, and in the prison belonging to his Southward manor, he bequeathed his residue for works of charity and pious uses, especially in relieving poor religious houses, in marrying poor girls, and in succoring the poor, as his executors ‘ shall think will most contribute to the salvation of his soul.’ His codicils were dated 7 and 9 April 1447. In the last two days before he died, he leaves queen Margaret his bed of the golden cloth of Damascus, in which she had slept at his manor of Waltham, with the Arras tapestry, hanging in the same chamber. p. 340.

⁴⁴ He died 31 March 1448. He had been a prisoner in France fifteen years. He was released at last, and made duke of Somerset in 1443. He went again to France, and returned with great pomp to England; but on some accusations, not particularized, he was forbidden the king’s presence: the monk of Croyland adds, ‘ the noble heart of so illustrious a man took the message of this unfortunate rumor most indignantly; and not able to bear the stain of so great a disgrace, by his own procuring (procurando, ut fertur) he hastened his own death; chusing

violently. The duke of Buckingham was wounded in the first, and killed in the third battle of the civil war, in which lord Beaumont fell ; and several of the other members of the administration were murdered by a future insurgent mob. The queen herself, so far from profiting by it, found all her ambitious hopes defeated by its occurrence.⁴⁴ Crime usually disappoints the hope that adopts it.

The duke of Gloucester, amid failings that have been before alluded to, has acquired the pleasing epithet of The Good ;⁴⁵ and has been extolled for his promotion of the learned or deserving clergy.⁴⁶ Fond of literature, and of literary conversation, he patronized men of talent and erudition.⁴⁷ One is called, in a public record, his poet and orator ;⁴⁸

CHAP.
III.
REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

Glouces-
ter's char-
acter.

rather to end compendiously his present sorrow, than to pass longer an unhappy life in opprobrium.' p. 519. His daughter was the mother of Henry VII.

⁴⁴ ' His death brought to pass that thing which she would most fain have eschewed, and took from her that jewel, which she most desired. For, if this duke had lived, the duke of York durst not have made title to the crown ; the nobles had not conspired against the king, nor the commons rebelled.' Hall, p. 210.

⁴⁵ ' For his honorable and liberal demeanor, he was surnamed the good duke of Gloucester.' Fab. 444. The popular phrase of ' dining with duke Humphrey,' implies the long sympathising remembrance by the public, of his fate. ⁴⁶ W. Wyr. p. 463.

⁴⁷ ' He was frequently noticed by the foreign literati : Leo Aretins dedicated to him a translation of Aristotle's Politics ; Peter de Monte, a work on the Differences of the Virtues and Vices ; Lapi Castellius, his book on the comparison of study and a military life ; P. Candidus, a Latin version of Cato's Republic.' Tanner, Bib. Mon. 420, 421. De Monte says to him, ' nothing seem'd pleasant or acceptable to you without reading ; nor did you delight only in one art or science, but in almost all, and read their MSS. with great avidity.' The duke was fond of astronomy, and caused some tables of the planets to be calculated, and of the fixed stars. Tann. ib. In the British Museum MSS. E 5. is a work on Scotland, with these words at the end in the duke's hand-writing ; ' Cest livre est a moy Homfrey duc de Gloucestre, lequel j'achetay des executens Maistre Thomas Polton feu evesque de Wurcrestre.'

⁴⁸ This was Titus Livius, who wrote the life of Henry VI. The grant of denization to him as an Italian, styles him, ' poetas et oratori of our dearest uncle the duke of Gloucester.' 10 Rym. p. 661. Enæas Sylvius,

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

and Lydgate prefaces one of his voluminous works, with a panegyric upon him, written during the king's absence on his French coronation, which presents to us the qualities for which, while he was living, the poet found him remarkable, and thought fit to commend him.⁶⁰

who became a pope, praises the duke for his pursuing the studia humanitatis, summo studio; and adds, ' who, as it has been related to me, patronises poets wonderfully, and highly venerates orators.' Ep. 64.

⁶⁰ These verses are in the MS. 18 D 4. in the British Museum:

' Eek in this land, I dare affirm a thing.
 There is a prince full mighty of puissance,
 A kynges sou; uncle to the kyng
 Henry the Sixte which is now in France:
 And is lestenant and hath the governance
 Of our Bretayne;
 He hath conserved in this region,
 Duryng his tyme, off ful hih prudence
 Pes and quiete, and sustened riht;
 Yet notwithstanding his noble provydence
 He is indeede provyd a good knyght.
 Eied as Argus with reson and forsiht,
 Off hih lecture I dar eck off him telle
 And truly deeme that he doth excelle
 In understanding all other of his age;
 And hath gret joie with clerkie to commune;
 And no man is more expert off language;
 Stable in studie, alwei he doth contune
 Settyng aside alle thynge of fortune;
 And when he loveth, gif I shall not tarie
 Without cause ful loth he is to varie.
 Duc off Gloucestre men this prince calle;
 And notwithstanding his staat and dignyte,
 His corage never doth appalle
 To studie in booke of antiquite;
 Therein he hath so gret felicite
 Vertuousli hymself to occupie,
 Off vinous slouth to have the maistrie:
 And with his prudence, and wit his manheed
 Trouthe to susteyne, he favour set aside
 And hooli churche menteyning in deede
 As verrai support, upholdere, and eke guyde,
 Spareth non, but maketh hymself strong
 To punishe alle tho that do the church wrong.
 Thus is he both manly, eek wise,
 Chose of God to be his own knyght;
 And off o thyng he hath a syngor price
 That heretik dar non cou in his siht:
 In Christes feith be stant so bol upriht

Off hooly church defence and champion,
To chastise alle that do thereto treson.
And to do plesance to our Lord Jehu
He studieth eie to have intelligence :
Heedinge of bookis bringeth in vertu,
Vicese excludyng sloathe and negligence
Maketh a prince to have experience
To know hymselfe many sundry wise,
When he trespasseth his errour to chastize.'

CHAP.
III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

After mentioning that the duke had considered the book of Boccasio, on the Fall of Princes, he adds, ' and he gave me commandment, that I shoulde after my conning this book translate him to do plesance.'

MSS. 18 D 4.

C H A P. IV.

Administration of the Duke of SUFFOLK ; his Impeachment, and Death.

BOOK III. THE deaths of Winchester and Gloucester, the avowed favor of the queen, and the acquiescence of Henry, gave to Suffolk the command of the government of the country; but without its good will. The certainty that he had caused the arrest, and the suspicion that he had contrived the murder, of the duke of Gloucester, added to the dislike of his French negotiations, created a public aversion to his administration, which his future conduct increased. Somerset seems to have struggled with him for his power, but to have failed, and to have been too proud to survive his failure.

It was not long before another incident occurred, which again turned the eye of suspicion upon this unprincipled or calumniated nobleman; and with which, from bad judgment if he was innocent, and with a presumptuous short-sightedness if a criminal abettor, he chose to connect himself. As the lord Cromwell, who had been formerly appointed treasurer by Gloucester, was in the star-chamber, with the prime minister and others, one Tailboys came and stationed himself, with several followers, secretly armed, for the purpose of assassinating Cromwell, as that nobleman believed and asserted. The man being taken, endeavored to excuse himself, and Suffolk favored his excuses; but Cromwell

indicted Tailboys for the meditated violence, and, notwithstanding Suffolk's opposition, proceeded against him till he was fined three thousand pounds, and committed to the Tower. The countenance given by the new duke to this offender, led Cromwell to such inferences, that he is declared to have secretly urged the commons to that subsequent impeachment of the minister, which occasioned his destruction.¹

CHAP.
IV.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

But altho thus triumphant and powerful, Suffolk's mind was not tranquil. He still secretly trembled at the possibility of the popular clamor becoming a legal accusation, and he sought to avert this peril by forestalling a legal exoneration. He complained to the king in Parliament, that the enemy of civil concord and truth had spread thro the island, that he had acted faithlessly to the crown in delivering up Anjou and Maine; and he prayed, that a day and time might be appointed, on which he might vindicate himself from the allegation. The 25th of May, about three months after Gloucester's death, was fixed for this purpose, in the royal palace at Westminster; and the nominated judges were principally his friends. There he attended, and employed his eloquence to shew, that he had acted honorably and prudently. He spoke before a favorable tribunal, and he had confined the charge to a defensible point. The king, therefore, issued a judgment, declaring that he was innocent, and that his accusers and slanderers should be punished; and enjoining silence on all persons upon this subject.²

In December, the truce was again prolonged.³

¹ W. Wyr. has preserved this incident, 467, 8. His procuring the pardon of Tailboys, was one of the second list of charges against him. P. Rolls, 5. p. 181.

² Rym. Fed. 11. p. 173.

³ Rym. p. 193. Monstrelet's account of the truce is, that the first

BOOK III. Powers were, in the following January, given to bishop Moleyns, and others, to negotiate again.⁴ The truce was, in April, continued further; and in June, the delivery of the towns in Maine was directed to be completed.⁵

REIGN OF HENRY VI.
Character of Suffolk's administration.

The ministerial conduct of Suffolk is thus unfavorably stated, by an ancient chronicler, who lived at that period: “A man of singular cunning, and learned in the art of deceiving, he inclined people to assent to his will. Obtaining the king’s confidence and familiarity, and abusing his simplicity, he thought to dispose as he pleased of almost all the business of the kingdom. Hence, conferring bishoprics and royal benefices for money, and casting out and intruding at his own will, he did many things in the kingdom against justice, for his power alone. His presumption advanced so far, that, by fraud or circumvention, he removed from the king’s presence all the king’s relations and friends, and all the kinsmen of the royal blood, and the prelates, clerks, and laymen.”⁶ In another passage he adds, “His heart became too much elated, and more and more exalted before his ruin. Perceiving, from the king’s having no friends of the royal blood near, that his advice was only used, and that he could bend the king’s mind as he wished, he introduced some of his own faction into the sovereign’s peculiar service, as W. Ascough, the bishop of Salisbury, and lord Saye, who drove away all that strove for the king’s grace

expired 1 April 1445. v. 8 p. 384. That the French ambassadors to England prolonged it to November 1446. p. 403. And bishop Moleyns, to 1 April 1447. p. 408. It was extended to 1 April 1449. p. 411. And afterwards to 1 June 1449, in hopes of effecting a peace. p. 412. On these, see Rymer 11. p. 97. 108. 120. 196. 214. 223.

⁴ Rym. 196.

⁵ Ib. 214, 215.

⁶ Hist. Croyl. 521.

CHAP.
IV.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

and presence, without their connivance. Inflamed with an inextinguishable rapacity, they sent round to all the monasteries of the kingdom, collecting gifts and presents for themselves, in the king's name; and they divided among themselves the great sums raised from the tenths and taxes for the royal treasury."⁷ These imputations shew the prejudices against his administration. Fabian gives another exciting cause of the disturbances that subsequently arose, in the intimation, that it was from the extraordinary subsidy applied for by Suffolk, to defray the expenses of the queen's coming to England, that "he grew into such hatred of the people, that finally it cost him his life."⁸ Other grievances or evil measures may put the public mind into an explosive state; but financial impositions are the most perilous agitators.

1449.
12 Feb.Somerset
asks for
succors.

Suffolk continued for a while to rule as he wished; and the parliament assembled at Westminster in February, to be prorogued to May; and at the end of May, to be deferred again to the middle of June, at Winchester.⁹ There the new duke of Somerset, now the chief commander in France, represented, that the final truce with that country would expire in fourteen months; and that the French king was strengthening all his garrisons, and had commanded his nobles to be ready harnessed and armed within fifteen days; and that every thirty men should furnish a man horsed and armed, which would produce 60,000 men. He assured them, that if the threatened

⁷ Hist. Croyl. 525. He subjoins to this, 'their dropsical thirst increasing, they gave up the king's foreign castles, towns and possessions for immense sums of gold.' Ib. Such is the inculpation of Suffolk which the monk has recorded. We cannot now decide on the justice of all its imputations; but there is a general veracity in our monkish chroniclers, which entitles their assertions to great respect.

* Fab. 442.

* Rolls Parl. 5. p. i41-3.

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

war should occur, Normandy was in no wise sufficient to resist it, as no place had been repaired, or provided with artillery; but that every fortress was in a ruinous and indefensible state. He added, that when the three estates in Normandy granted their last aid, they declared, that from the general poverty of the country, no more could be raised. He concluded, by calling to their minds the great, inestimable, and well nigh infinite cost and effusion both of money and blood, which England had borne and suffered for its French conquests; and that "the shameful loss of these would not only be the irreparable hurt of the common profit, but an everlasting spite and perpetual denigration in the fame and renown of this noble realm."¹⁰

This energetic statement produced neither a ministerial nor a parliamentary sympathy. No exertion was made; no supplies were sent. The field was left open for the French monarch, to traverse it when he pleased, and to drive us to the sea whenever he should judge it convenient, either to himself or to his English friends, to accomplish this result.

York accuses Bishop Moleyns.

But the duke of York now came forward, to vindicate himself, and to attack the clerical statesman, Moleyns, the bishop of Chichester, who had so long held the privy seal. He charged the prelate with having falsely calumniated him for his conduct, while governor of France and Normandy, as to the administration of the finances, and the payment of the soldiers; and for imputing to him the loss of the French provinces. The minister denied having uttered the words complained of, and declared, that so far from laying the loss of Normandy to any person

¹⁰ Rolls Parl. 5. p. 148.

alive, it was his opinion, that this country was not yet to be despaired of, and ought not to be abandoned.¹¹

A struggle of parties soon ensued in the cabinet itself. Suffolk continued in his elevation ; but the two Staffords, the chancellor and the treasurer, were dismissed, to the great displeasure of their brother, the duke of Buckingham. It was the queen's party triumphing over their rivals. York visited the king, and was kindly received ; but would have been harshly treated, if Buckingham had not shielded him.¹² The parliament that met at Westminster in November, was adjourned, from the allegation of a pestilential sickness, to the Blackfriars at London ; and in December, was prorogued to the latter end of January.¹³ Moleyns, either from discerning the approach of a political storm, or from really feeling the infirmities that he mentioned, obtained leave to withdraw from the cabinet ;¹⁴ and the new year opened, that was destined to be so calamitous to the queen's friends and favorites. The government forbade any to carry arms in London or Middlesex ;¹⁵ and the duke of Suffolk, alarmed at his own unpopularity, again endeavored to prevent any dangerous impeachment, by inviting it, while he had the power to make it harmless. On the first day of the parliament assembling, he rose in the house of lords, in the presence of the king, and requested them "to

CHAP.
IV.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

¹¹ These articles of accusation are preserved in the Harl. MSS. N^o 543.

¹² Fenn's Orig. Letters, vol. 1. p. 27. ¹³ Rolls Parl. 5. p. 171, 2.

¹⁴ His petition alleges that he was weak in body and especially in sight ; and that he is obliged to attend to his health, and must therefore abstain from all temporal business. This was granted, with leave to undertake a pilgrimage for the health of his soul, and to take 500 marks with him. ¹¹ Rym. 255.

¹⁵ Either ' Palettos, loricas, gladios, polaxes, gleyves, or others.' Ibid. 262.

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.Suffolk's
speech.

admit his supplication and desire, that he might make his declaration of the great infamy and defamation which were laid upon him, by many of the people of this land.”¹⁶

Having obtained permission, he made the following address :

“ Most high and dread sovereign lord ! “ I suppose well that it be comen to your ears, to my great heaviness and sorrow, the odious and horrible language that runs through your land, almost in every common’s mouth, sounding to my highest charge and most heaviest slander, by a certain confession of the keeper of your privy seal, made at his death, as it is said.” He then mentioned his father’s services to Henry IV. and to Henry V. in whose army he died at Harfleur ; that his eldest brother had perished at Agincourt, and two others in battle at Jargeau, “ the day that I was taken, as a knight ought to be, I trust, and paid 20,000*l.* to my deliverance. My fourth brother, lying for me in hostage, died in the enemies’ land. I was myself armed, in your father’s days and your’s, thirty-four winters, and have had the garter, thirty. For seventeen years I abode in the wars, without coming home or seeing this land, and have served you since my return, fifteen years.” He then emphatically added, “ All these things considered, if for a Frenchman’s promise I should be either false or untrue to your high estate, or to this your land, that I am born of, there could be no earthly punishment but it would be too little for me.”¹⁷

1450.
26th Jan.

Four days afterwards, the commons seriously applied to his impeachment, and sent some members to

¹⁶ Rolls Parl. v. 5. p. 176.¹⁷ Ibid. p. 176.

the chancellor, to request, as Suffolk had confessed there was a heavy rumor and noise of slander and infamy upon him, that the king should be informed of it, and the duke be taken into custody. The chancellor asked the lords what was to be done ; and they desired the judges to be consulted, who agreed, that as there was no special matter alleged against him, he should not be arrested.¹⁸

CHAP.
IV.
REIGN OF
HENRY VI.
27th Jan.

On the 28th of January, the lower house, by their speaker, declared, " that the king's poor commons of his realm were as lovingly, as heartily, and as tenderly set to the good, welfare, and prosperity of his person and kingdom, as ever were any commons set to the welfare of their sovereign lord ; but that from every part of England there was come a great rumor and fame, that England was to be sold to the King's adversary of France and his uncle ; who were making ready to enter this land, with all their power, with the connivance of the duke of Suffolk ; and that this minister had stuffed his castle of Wallingford with guns, gunpowder, and other habiliments of war, to give them a place of refuge and succor." Therefore they requested his committal to the Tower.¹⁹

Notwithstanding the repugnance and influence of the court, this measure was found to be too strongly called for by the feelings of the country to be resisted. He was apprehended ; and the commons soon exhibited their bill of impeachment against him.

The substance of their charges was, That, on the 20th of July 1447, he had excited and counselled Suffolk
impeached

¹⁸ Rolls Parl. v. 5. p. 177.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 177.

BOOK III. the French ambassadors to persuade their sovereign to invade England, to depose Henry, and to place the duke's son on the throne, whom he had married to the heiress of Somerset, "presuming her to be the next inheritable to the crown."²⁰ That he had corruptly advised the release of the duke of Orleans, and counselled this nobleman to excite the French king to continue the war. That, when ambassador, he had promised the queen's father the surrender of Mans and Maine, without the knowlege of the rest of the embassy, which was alleged to be the greater cause of the loss of Normandy. That he had revealed the state of the armies, towns, and garrisons in France to the enemy, by which Normandy had been lost; and had discovered to the French court the secret of the king's council, as well concerning England, as for the government of Normandy and France. That, being the greatest of the royal council, he had communicated to Charles all the instructions given to the ambassadors from England, before they went into France, which occasioned the truce to have no effect, and all our places to be taken. That, when provision had been made for sending armies to France, he had prevented their passage;

²⁰ Suffolk had obtained the wardship and marriage of the daughter of the late duke of Somerset, the grandson of John of Gaunt, son to Edward III. The articles say, that he united her to his son, pretending that she was the next kin to the crown. Gloucester only preceded her on the Lancastrian side, and she was the line under which her son Henry VII. was invited to and obtained the crown. Hence tho the charge strikes us at first sight as strange, yet it may not have been quite frivolous. York's maternal line stood in the way, but the parliament having established the house of Lancaster on the throne in preference to York's ancestor and right of descent, this lady was a nearer heir to Henry, and therefore to the crown as settled on his family, than any other in England, except Gloucester. She was not the nearer heir to Edward III. the common ancestor; but she was so to Henry VI. the reigning sovereign, till his son was born.

and that, in the truce which he made, he did not include either the king of Arragon or duke of Bretagne, our allies, by which the first was become unfriendly, and the latter an enemy. In proof of the traitorous intercourse with the French cabinet, it was also asserted, that he had declared, in the consultation at the Star-chamber, that he had his place in the council-house of the French king, as he had in England, and was as well trusted in one as in the other; and could remove from the service of Charles the priviest man of his council, if he chose.²¹

CHAP.
IV.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

The bill was read, and the duke was ordered to answer to the accusation; but on the 9th of March, the house of commons presented eighteen further charges against him, which he was brought from the Tower to hear read.²² He requested a copy of them; and four days afterwards, he was brought before the king and lords; and, kneeling, made his answer. He averred, that the first charge must needs be untrue; it was impossible that he should do so. They who had thus accused him, could not find the means to make it possible. It was against law and reason, to make the lady Margaret so near the crown as to support the charge; and he appealed to the lords, that they knew that if the earl of

²¹ Rolls Parl. 5. p. 177-9.

²² The principal of these were, corrupt grants to enrich his own family and others, and to evade the laws; procuring offices for unworthy persons; discovering the councils of the cabinet to the French king; privy communications with his ambassadors; presents to the French queen and counsellors; misemploying subsidies; distributing to himself and friends great part of the 60,000*l.* left in the treasury by lord Sudeley; taking out of the treasury several of the bonds given for the ransom of the duke of Orleans, and putting in forged ones instead; making sheriffs for lucre; the procuring pardon for the murderer Tailboys, and the obtaining the reversionary grant of the earldom of Pembrok. Rolls Parl. v. 5. p. 180, 1.

BOOK III. Warwick's daughter had lived, he had selected her to be his son's wife.²³

**REIGN OF
HENRY VI.**

On the other articles he referred to the official acts of the council, to the statutes made in parliament, and to the king's letters patent, for his justification. He had done nothing but what they sanctioned. The other lords of the council had been as privy as he was to the proceedings about Anjou and Mans ; and the delivering them up was peculiarly attributable to the late privy seal, the bishop of Chichester. He seemed to be most pressed by the words he was charged to have uttered. He did not actually deny them, but he asserted, that he had not said them in the form specified in the articles, but under other language ; and he positively denied their treasonable import.²⁴

17 March.

Eight days afterwards, the king sent for all the lords then in town, into the inmost chamber of his palace at Westminster. The duke was brought in, and knelt down. The chancellor, by the king's command, asked him what he meant to say. The duke answered, that the articles were too horrible to speak more of them ; that he trusted he had answered them sufficiently, for he had denied the days, the years, and the places of the alleged communications. They were utterly false and untrue ; and in a manner impossible, for such great things could not have been

²³ Rolls Parl. 182. He had obtained her wardship ; but that he had before her death meant to have married her to his son, was no proof that he did not afterwards conceive the ambitious scheme with his other ward. He did in fact marry her to his son, and by that marriage placed his son close to the throne. It is certainly extraordinary that procuring Gloucester's death was not made one of the charges. But this may have arisen from the impossibility of proving so secret a transaction. The rolls of parliament shew that it was imputed to him in after proceedings.

²⁴ Rolls Parl. 182.

done or brought about by himself alone, unless other persons had contributed their part, and been privy to them as well as himself. He pledged his soul to perpetual damnation, if he knew more of such crimes than the child in the mother's womb; but without departing from his answer, he submitted wholly to the king's rule and governance, to do with him as he pleased.²⁵

The chancellor then replied, that as he had not put himself upon his peerage, but had submitted to the royal care, the king had commanded him to say, that as to the first accusation, the duke was neither charged nor delivered; and as to the second, his majesty, by his own advice, and without consulting with the lords, and not pronouncing it in the way of judgment, ordered him to absent himself from England for five years.²⁶ The lords entered a protest, that this measure was the king's own determination, and not their advice.²⁷ On 19th March, the king adjourned the parliament to Leicester, to meet there on the middle of April.²⁸

The duke's unpopularity was so great, that while the government was hesitating on the proceedings against him, insurrections arose in several places, with captains assuming the name of Bluebeard, and other fantastic appellations; but they were vigorously met and suppressed.²⁹

On the same night that the duke left Westminster for Suffolk, a mob of 2000 people rose in London;

CHAP.
IV.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

His exile
by the
king.

²⁵ Rolls Parl. 183.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid. A letter in Fenn's collection, dated March 1450, shews how this exile was construed: 'It is said that the duke of Suffolk is pardoned, and hath his men again waiting upon him, and is right well at ease, and merry, and is in the king's good grace, and in the good conceit of all the lords as well as ever he was.' v. 1. p. 26.

²⁸ W. Wyr. 469.

²⁹ Fab. 448.

BOOK III. and searched about St. Giles for him. They found his horse saddled, and his servant waiting, and treated them cruelly.³⁰ But he was himself out of their reach.

REIGN OF HENRY VI.
22 April.

While the duke was at his country residence, the parliament, pursuant to its prorogation, met at Leicester. The debts of the crown, which in 1442 were 200,000*l.*, had now increased to 362,000*l.*; and the yearly expences of the royal household exceeded their appropriated funds by 19,000*l.*³¹ The parliament imposed a taxation on all persons having lands, rents, or offices, according to the income received.³² But the disastrous tidings that now came from all parts, soon terminated their sittings.

The duke of Suffolk appears to have enjoyed the comfort of his country retirement about a month, and on the 28th of April wrote that admirable letter of moral advice to his son, which makes us regret that ambition should have spoilt a mind so valuable.³³

³⁰ W. Wyr. 468.

³¹ Rolls Parl. 5. p. 183.

³² Rolls P. 5. p. 172, 3. This income tax was sixpence in the pound up to twenty pounds; a shilling from twenty to two hundred, and two shillings beyond that sum.

³³ It is among Fenn's original letters, v. 1. p. 32. 'My dear and only well-beloved son, I beseech our Lord in heaven, the maker of all the world, to bless you, and to send you ever grace to love him, and to dread him; to the which, as far as a father may charge his child, I both charge you, and pray you to set all your spirits and wits to do, and to know his holy laws and commandments, by the which ye shall, with his great mercy, pass all the great tempests and troubles of this wretched world.'

'And that also, weetingly, ye do nothing for love nor dread of any earthly creature that should displease him. And there as [whenever] any frailty maketh you to fall, beseech his mercy soon to call you to him again with repentance, satisfaction, and contrition of your heart, never more in will to offend him.'

'Secondly, next him above all earthly things, to be true liegeman in heart, in will, in thought, in deed, unto the king our elder [greatest] high and dread sovereign lord, to whom both ye and I be so much bound to; charging you as father can and may, rather to die than to be the contrary, or to know any thing that were against the welfare or prosperity of his most royal person; but that as far as your body and life may stretch,

Two days afterwards, he assembled the knights and gentlemen of the neighborhood, and swore to them on the sacrament, that he would prove himself to be free from the imputed treason, and from the sale of Normandy.²⁴ He then thought it expedient to leave England, and sailed from Ipswich in the first week of May, with three ships, towards the British channel.

As he came near Dover, he sent his smallest vessel towards Calais, to ascertain the reception he would experience. On 2d May, it was met by a large ship called Nicholas of the Tower, with others, whose commander learnt from it, that the duke of Suffolk was behind. As he came in sight, the captain sent

CHAP.
IV.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

May.
Suffolk is
killed.

²⁴ W. Wyr. 469.

ye live and die to defend it, and to let his highness have knowlege thereof in all haste ye can.

‘ Thirdly, in the same wise, I charge you, my dear son, always as ye are bounden by the commandment of God to do, to love, to worship, your lady and mother; and also that ye obey alway her commandments, and to believe her counsels and advices in all your works, the which dread not but shall be best and truest to you. And if any other body would steer you to the contrary, to flee the counsel in any wise, for ye shall find it nought and evil.

‘ Furthermore, as far as a father may and can, I charge you in any wise to flee the company and counsel of proud men, of covetous men, and of flattering men, especially and insightly to withstand them, and not to draw nor to meddle with them, with all your might and power; and to draw to you, and to your company, good and virtuous men; and such as be of good conversation, and of truth; and by them ye shall never be deceived nor repent you of.

‘ Moreover, never follow your own wit in no wise, but in all your works, of such folks as I write of above, ask your advice and counsel, and doing thus, with the mercy of God, ye shall do right well, and lie in right much worship, and great hearts rest and ease. And I will be to you as good lord and father as my heart can think.

‘ And last of all, as heartily and as lovingly as ever father blessed his child in earth, I give you the blessing of our Lord and of me, which of his infinite mercy increase you in all virtue and good living; and that your blood may by his grace from kindred to kindred multiply in this earth to his service, in such wise as after the departing from this wretched world here, ye and they, may glorify him eternally amongst his angels in heaven.

‘ Written of mine hand,

‘ The day of my departing fro this land,

‘ Your true and loving father,

‘ SUFFOLK.’

‘ April 28,
1450 H. VI.’

BOOK III. out his boat, to question them. The duke himself answered, that he was going by the king's order to Calais. He was told that he must speak with their master. Without hesitation he got into the boat with a few followers, and was towed to the Nicholas, whose master rudely greeted him with "Welcome, traitor." His men were asked if they meant to support him, but they readily abandoned him. He was detained two days in the ship, and after confessing with his chaplain, the sailors arraigned him in their own way, upon the impeachment, and found him guilty. The name of the ship brought to his remembrance an idle prediction, and his heart failed him.²⁵ He was then drawn out of the ship into a boat. One of the common men ordered him to lay his head down; saying that he should be fairly dealt with, and die on a sword. After earnest petitions for mercy, and promises of abundant recompence—in vain—he obeyed; and the fellow taking a rusty sword, after half a dozen blows, struck off his head. They took off his russet gear and doublet of mailed velvet; landed, and laid the body on the sands, with his followers, unhurt, and his property, and sailed away. The sheriff of Kent hastened to the spot, and watched the body; while his messengers carried the tidings to the judges and the king, and inquired their directions for his conduct.²⁶ His remains were removed to the colle-

²⁵ One Stacey had told him, that if he escaped the dangers of the Tower, he should be safe. Having been released from the Tower of London, he thought he was safe; but in the moment of real alarm, he suffered the coincidence of the ship's name 'Nicholas of the Tower,' to shake his courage.

²⁶ These particulars are mentioned in a letter written within three days after the duke's murder. 1 Fenn, p. 38-42. The writer feelingly says, 'I have so washed this little bill with sorrowful tears, that scarcely ye shall read it.' p. 39. See also Fabian, 449, and W. Wyr. 469.

giate church of Wingfield, in Suffolk, and honorably interred.²⁷

CHAP.
IV.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

Thus perished, from the murderous spirit of popular resentment,²⁸ a nobleman of some talents, whose domestic virtues might have surrounded his life with happiness as well as honor, if they had been less counteracted by his ambition. Love of power was the bait that lured him to his ruin; and an indifference to the means of acquiring it, and to the consequences of its intemperate exertion, produced a national resentment, which few ministers have incurred without a fatal catastrophe. The lawless mode of his death was calculated to excite a general indignation; but the belief that he had caused the duke of Gloucester's end by violence, prevented any public sympathy for his own.²⁹ The foreign disasters of England, began under him at the siege of Orleans; and its

²⁷ Hall, 219.

²⁸ W. Wycrestre asserts, that the ships which took him were lying in wait for him; and the Croyland monk, p. 525, that they sailed after him. Others impute the crime to the lords who opposed him; yet the fair import of the facts detailed in the letters of the Paston family, published by Fenn, seems to imply an accidental meeting of the ships, and that the sailors murdered him as others destroyed the bishop at Portsmouth. It is remarkable that Monstrelet calls his destroyers the partizans of the duke of Somerset. 9. p. 116. This has been thought a mistake; but when we recollect that the preceding duke had killed himself from having been disgraced two years before by Suffolk's administration, it becomes difficult amid the numerous enemies he had made, to deny, or affirm of any, that they participated in the crime.

²⁹ In the British Museum, Vesp. B 16, is a ballad written at this time on the catastrophes of Suffolk and his friends. It treats these horrors with an exulting levity, which shews the barbarous unfeelingness of political rancor; but it is curious for giving the names of those friends of the government who were most hated by the people. They are the clerical statesmen who were employed either in the offices of government, or on its embassies; and it shews how much the dominant church had, by these employments, become identified with the crown. It designates the duke of Suffolk by the cant term 'Jac Napes,' and is perhaps the earliest instance we have of the abusive application of the word Jackanapes. Our lexicographers derive this word from Jack and ape; but the ballad shews, that napes was a term of derision signifying a knave; and must therefore be the Saxon Cnape; which bore also this meaning. This will explain

BOOK III. domestic calamities, by his unwise, arbitrary, and not disinterested administration.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

the reason why our third figured card is called Jack, and also knave. The word Jackanspes therefore seems to be Jack Cnapa, and to mean, 'Jack the knave.' In this sense it is applied to Suffolk, and as the knave is next in power at cards to the king and queen, the nickname may be used in the ballad with an allusion to Suffolk's being the prime minister of Henry and Margaret. But as a clergyman only could have introduced so many Latin quotations from the Psalms, we cannot read it without regret that he should have had a heart so unpitying, as to be able to jest with such materials on such a calamity. Yet it is pleasing to feel that no one now in the English church could have written such a composition. Placebo and dirige were part of the chants of the funeral service. Most of the other Latin words are from the penitential Psalms, or from those used in the anthems for the dead.

In the moneth of May, when grass growes grene,
Fragrant in her flowres with swete savour,
Jac Napes wold on the see, a maryner to ben,
With his clogi and his cheyn to seke more tresour.

Swych a payn prikked hym, he asked a confessour,
Nicolas said, 'I am redi, the confessour to be.'
He was holden so, that he ne passed that hour,
For Jac Napes soule, 'placebo et dirige.'

Who shall execute his exequies with a solempnite ?
Bishopes and lordes; as grete reson is;
Monkes, chanons, prestes, and other clergie !
Pray for this duke's soule, that it might come to blis.

And let never swych another come after this,
His interfectores blessed might thei be,
And graunte them for ther dede to regne with angeles ;
And for Jac Nape soule, 'placebo et dirige.'

'Placebo' begynneth the bisshop of Herford.
'Dilexi, for myn avauncement,' saith the bisshop of Chester.
'Heu me!' saith Salisbury, this goth to farr forthe.
'Ad dominum cum tribulares,' saith the abbot of Glocestre.
'Dominus custodit,' saith the abbot of Rouchestre,
'Levam oculos,' saith Frere Stanbury, 'Volavi
'Ei iniquitates,' saith the bisshop of Worcestre.
For Jac Nape soule, 'de profundis clamavi.'

'Opera manum tuarum,' saith the cardinal wisely,
That brought forth 'confitebor,' for all this Napes reson,
'Audivi vocem,' songe allmighty God on hye,
And therfore syngwe 'magnificat anima mea dominum.'

Unto this dirige most we gon and come,
This pascall tyme to say veryli.
Thre psalmes and thre lessons that alle is and some,
For Jac Nape soule, 'placebo et dirige.'

Executor of this office dirige for to syng,
Shall begin the bisshop of Synt Asse,
'Verba mea auribus,' sayth abbot of Redynge,
Alle your joye and hope is come to 'alasse.'

CHAP.
IV.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

'Comitero Domine,' yet graunte us grace,
Sayth abbot of Synt Albans ful sorely,
The abbot of the Tower-hill *with his fat face*,
Quakes and trembleth for Domine ne in furore.

Maister Waterhard shall syng 'ne quando,'
The abbot of Westmynstre 'Domine Deus meus in te speravi.'
'Requiem eternam,' graunte them all to come to,
Therto a pater noster saith the bisshop of Synt Davy.

For ther soules that wise were and mighty,
Suffolk, Moleyns and Roos thes thre,
And in especial for Jac Napes that ever was wily,
For his soule, 'placebo et dirige.'

Rise up Say! rede 'Parce mihi Domine,'
'Nichil enim sunt dies mei,' thou shalt syng.
The bisshop of Carlyle syng 'credo' ful sore,
To suych fals traitours come foule endyng.

The baron of Dudley with grete mornynge,
Redeth, 'detet animam meam vita mea.'
Who but Danyel 'qui lasarum,' shall syng,
For Jack Nape soule, 'placebo et dirige.'

John Say redeth 'Manus tua fecerunt me.'
'Libera me,' syngeth Trevilian, Warre the rere,
That thei do no more so 'requiescant in pace,'
Thus preys all England ferre and nerre.

Where is Somerset, whi aperes he not here,
To syng 'dies irae et misere?'
God graunte England all in fere,
For these traitours to syng 'placebo et dirige.'

Meny mo that be behinde the sothe for to telle
That shall messes oppon thes do syng,
I pray some may do ryng the belle,
That these forsaiden may come to the sacryng.

And that in bref tyme without more tarienge,
That this meese may be ended in suych degré,
And that all England joyful may syng
The comedacion, with 'placebo et dirige.'

Cott. MSS. Vesp. D 16.

C H A P. V.

Renewal of the War in France.—Disasters.—Tumults in England.—Jack Cade's Insurrection.

BOOK
III. **T**H E disasters in France, which, in 1450, were disturbing the public mind of England, arose from that breach of the truce in 1448, which an officer in the English service had made by taking the town of Fougeres from Bretagne, during the covenanted suspension of arms; and afterwards plundering the adjacent country.¹

The French king complained of the infraction; but tho the government of England, and Somerset, its lieutenant in France, disavowed the action, they did not restore the place; and it was afterwards a charge against Somerset, that the violation of the truce was with his privity or procurement. The duke of Bretagne's allies surprised, in retaliation, an English garrison, with lord Fauconbridge, and then proposed an exchange of captures, which the English refused.² A bickering state ensued between the forces of the two nations, and some towns were wrested from the English, which the French king would have restored, if Fougeres had been given up.³ But this amicable arrangement was not acceded to, probably from this castle being a frontier place, between Bretagne and Normandy, and therefore

¹ Monst. 8. p. 428-431. On this event, Fabian remarks, ‘of the taking of this town, ensued much harm to the Englishmen; for this was the occasion by which the Frenchmen, after, got all Normandy.’ p. 447.

² Ib. p. 437-440.

³ Ib. p. 442-4.

deemed essential to the defence of the latter. At a subsequent conference for peace, the French not only demanded this town, but also 1,600,000 crowns for the damages they had sustained ; this being immediately disdained, Charles made a protest of all that he had done to maintain peace, and made preparations for that vigorous war⁴ which he soon after declared. The secret expeditions of the English garrisons for dishonorable plunder or revenge, made the hostilities against them popular.⁵

CHAP.
V.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

The French gentlemen, and the greater nobility, flocked zealously to their sovereign's banners ; and August and September 1449 were distinguished by the easy capture, from their overpowering forces, of many towns and fortresses which the English had held.⁶ The populace of Rouen wished also to surrender that important city ; but tho Talbot and Somerset resisted, it was only to agree to a capitulation, afterwards in November, on worse terms.⁷ It is with surprise we read, that, in such a perilous crisis, when the greatest activity and most determined resistance could alone check the French conquests, Somerset had his wife and children with him in his campaign in this city.⁸ Such an attendance implies no intended military vigor, or no competent capacity. He left Rouen for Honfleur, which was

⁴ Monst. 8. p. 445.

⁵ Ib. 9. p. 2, 3.

⁶ Monstrel. v. 9. p. 7-49. The towns were, Nogent; Pont Audemer, Verneuil, Mants, Loigny, Anjou, Gournay, in August ; and Roche Guyen, Necorp, Harcourt, St. Lo, Carentan, Alencon, Mauleon, Argentan, Fresney, Gisors, Gallon, in September ; Condé afterwards. Ib.

⁷ Monst. p. 60-75. This author asserts, that besides evacuating Rouen, and making payments in money, Somerset agreed to give up three castles and three towns, for which he gave hostages ; but one of these, Honfleur, its governor refused to surrender. p. 87.

⁸ Ibid. p. 73.

BOOK III. besieged in December, and surrendered almost without defence.⁹

**REIGN OF
HENRY VI.**

A commander of some celebrity, sir Thomas Kerrell, landed with 3000 new troops from England, and took the field, with a selected army from all the English garrisons; but on the 18th of April 1450, was decisively beaten and taken prisoner at Fourmigney.¹⁰ This disaster ensured the expulsion of the English from France. Avranches, Bayeux, and other towns in Normandy, were soon taken,¹¹ and Caen at last besieged. Such a succession of disgraces excited the highest indignation in all classes in England. No ministers could be in safety after such an accumulation of losses and defeats; especially with the suspicion that they had been wilfully provoked or procured. And the death of Suffolk, instead of appeasing the public indignation, only incited it to demand new victims, and to resort to new outrages.

1450.
January,
June.

Two other persons who suffered from this fury of the people, were the bishops of Salisbury and Chichester. The first was murdered by his tenants.¹² Adam Moleyns, the other, was a great encourager of literature, but unhappily for himself, the member of an obnoxious administration, from which he had just retired.. To avoid danger, or to pursue his pilgrimage, he was endeavoring to escape to the

⁹ Monst. p. 94. Charles then made preparations to besiege Honfleur. During those at the abbey of Jamieges on the Seine, the celebrated Agnes Sorel met him—but only to die. Here this ‘fairest of the fair,’ ‘the lady of beauty,’ as she was called, from her person and from the castle of that name near Paris, which the king had given her, uttering a loud shriek and calling for mercy, expired, on 9 February 1450. Ib. p. 99.

¹⁰ Ibid. 109-113.

¹¹ Ib. 117-123.

¹² W. Wyr. 470. Hall, ch. 223. Fab. 453. Croyl. 525. He fell 29 June. Stowe, 392.

continent, when the populace of Portsmouth discovered him, and notwithstanding his age and ecclesiastical dignity, inhumanly destroyed him.¹³

CHAP.
V.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

To the parliament at Leicester, the great noblemen went armed for their own safety,¹⁴ both against the crown and the people, who were clamoring against an administration that was abhorred. No government can continue amid extensive unpopularity; accompanied with averted feeling. It may long despise, with safety, the criticism of the reason, but never the emotions of the hostile sensibility. The dissatisfaction of the country at the unwise measures of Suffolk and his party was so great, that men began already to meditate upon a change of dynasty, not from a dislike to the king, but from the impossibility of separating him from the queen, and her friends and faction. The duke of York was the natural choice, if the Lancastrian line, that had been forcibly interposed, were put aside. Hence his friends and favorers, altho he was in Ireland, began to talk publicly of his right, his excellent government in France, and his courteous demeanor; dangerous and exciting topics at this critical juncture.¹⁵ But while the eastern and western coasts of England were falling into this disaffected state, a formidable insurrection actually burst out in Kent.

The tumultuous assemblage commenced in the beginning of June, during the Whitsuntide week,

Cade's insurrection.

¹³ The record dated at Leicester 30 May 1450, states the bishop as then lately dead. 11 Rym. 271. But he was killed 9 Jan. st. 387.

¹⁴ Thus the earl of Devon came with 300 men 'well beseen,' and Warwick with above 400. 1 Fenn, 45. The prorogation had been made on 30 March to assemble at Leicester on 29 April. 5 Rolls Parl. p. 172.

¹⁵ Hall, 219. The duke was himself in Ireland at this time, and there is no evidence that these ideas sprang from him. He was then, as the duke of Orleans has been to the Bourbons, the object to which the discontented naturally looked.

BOOK
III.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

and John Cade, an Irishman, who assumed the name of Mortimer, and pretended, and was said to be an illegitimate cousin to the Duke of York,¹⁶ was appointed to be their leader. They published their complaints in a list of fifteen grievances.¹⁷

He arranged the vast multitude into convenient order, and marched to Blackheath.¹⁸ Having served in the French wars, he was able to encamp them with some military skill, and had trenches made with infixed pales for their defence.¹⁹ Here he prepared

¹⁶ Fab. 449.

¹⁷ Stowe has preserved these both in his Chronicle and in his MS. extracts. Harl. MSS. No 545. The substance of them will shew the views of these rioters:—

1. That it is openly noised, that Kent shall be destroyed, with a royal power, and made a wild forest, for the death of Suffolk, of which the commons of Kent were never guilty.

2. The king is stirred to live only on his commons, and other men to have the revenues of the crown.

3. The lords of his blood are put from his daily presence, and other mean persons of lower nature, exalted and made chief of the privy council.

4. People not paid for stuff and purveyance taken to the king's use.

5. The king's menial servants asken daily goods and lands of those impeached and indicted of treason, which the king grauteth as soon as the endangered be convicted.

6. Gentiles and the king's menial servants take the poor people's lands, notwithstanding their feoffments and titles.

7. The king's lands in France are aliened and put away fro the crown.

8. Collectors of the fifteenth penny in Kent, are greatly vexed in paying great sums into the exchequer.

9. Sheriffs and undersheriffs let to farm.

10. Simple people that use not hunting are greatly oppressed by indictments.

11. Returning names of inquests not summoned and warned.

12. Ministers of the court of Dover, vex and arrest out of their bounds.

13. People of Kent not suffered to have free election of their knights of the shire, but letters have been sent to the great rulers forcing them to chuse other persons than the commons wished.

14. That the knight of the shire should chuse the king's collectors indifferently without taking bribes, but the collector's offices are bought and sold extortiously at the knight's cost.

15. People are sore vexed in coets and labors by being called to the sessions of peace from the farthest and uttermost parts of the waste, which compel some men to five days journeying; they desire the size to be divided into two parts.

¹⁶ Fab. 449. W. Wyr. dates the insurrection about the 7th June. p. 477.

¹⁷ Hist. Croyl 526.

and presented his petitions to the king, stating the injuries and oppressions of which the people complained.²⁰ Government determining on an immediate resistance, the parliament at Leicester was dissolved; and the king hastening to London, collected near Smithfield an army of 20,000 men, and with these advanced against the rebels.²¹ Cade, apprized of his approach, retreated at midnight, to Sevenoaks, on the seventh day of his encampment,²² and there embattled his followers. Sir Humphrey Stafford and his brother, believing that they were flying, set out with a small party to pursue. Cade encouraged his men to stand the attack, and after

CHAP.
V.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

²⁰ Fab. 449. Besides the general complaints already cited, Cade gave in his own memorial, which Stowe has also copied. We add a summary of these; they express great personal loyalty to the king.

‘Imprimis desireth the said capitayn of the commons:

1. The welfare of the king and his true lords temporal and spiritual, and of all true lords of his council; he to take all his demesnes that he may reign like a king royal according as he is born our christen king anointed, and who so will say the contrary, we all will live and die in the same quarrel as his true liegemen.

2. Desireth—That he will avoid all the false progeny and affinity of the duke of Suffolk, and to take about his person his true lords: that is, York, lately exiled from him by Suffolk, and the mighty princes and dukes of Exeter, Buckingham, and Norfolk, and all the earls and barons of the land; and then shall he be the richest king christian.

3. Punishment of the false traitors who imagined Gloucester's death. He was proclaimed traitor; on the which quarrel we purpose to live and dye that it is false.

4. The realm of France, the dutchies of Normandy, Gascony, Guienne, Anjou, and Maine were delivered and lost by means of the said traitors.

5. That all the extortions used daily among the common people be laid down; that is, the green wax so falsely used to the perpetual destruction of the commons of Kent; also, the King's Bench so greevous to the shire of Kent; also, the taking of wheat and other grains, beef, mutton, and all other victuals, which is importable to the said commons; also, the statute of labourers and the great extortioneers and false traitors Slegge, Crowmer, Isle, and Rob. Este.’ Stowe, ch. 389.

²¹ W. Wyr. 470.

²² Fab. 449. The ancient memorandum in Fenn, v. 1. p. 61, marks the 22d June as the day of Cade's retreat. Sir J. Fenn had not observed that Cade made this retrograde motion before his subsequent successes.

BOOK III. a short conflict, the Staffords were defeated and killed.²³

**REIGN OF
HENRY VI.**

The king's council was, during this incident, discussing the demands of Cade, which some supported. The disaster of the Staffords occasioned a bolder expression of sentiment, and as it was intimated, that unless lord Say and others were committed to custody, those would join Cade who thought these ministers had injured the country, it was deemed prudent to send the arraigned persons to the Tower; and the royal army then returned to London and dispersed.²⁴

Cade, after his victory, put on the coat of mail, with the gilt nails and the gilt spurs of the knight he had slain, and resumed his camp at Blackheath on the 29th June.²⁵ There the archbishop of Canterbury and duke of Buckingham had long communications with him, and found him a man of no common understanding. He refused to lay down his arms, and insisted upon his terms; and the lords,

²³ W. Wyr. 470. Fab. 449. ‘All which season the king's host lay still upon Blackheath; being among them sundry opinions, so that some and many favored the captain.’ Fab. ib.

²⁴ Fab. 449. W. Wyr. 470. ‘The lords fearing their own servants, lest they would take the captain's party.’ Fab. 450. ‘The king, doubting as much his familiar servants, as his unknown subjects, which spared not to speak, that the captain's cause was profitable for the commonwealth.’ Hall, p. 221.

²⁵ Among Fenn's letters is one from Payne, whom his master, sir John Falstaff, sent from his house in Southwark, to get from the rebels the articles they wanted. He says, ‘So soon as I came to the Blackheath, the captain made the commons to take me, and I was brought forthwith before the captain of Kent. He demanded of me, what was my cause of coming thither.’ Finding that he came from Falstaff, Cade cried, Treason, and had it proclaimed that he came to espy their puissance from the greatest traitor in England: therefore he said plainly, that I should lose my head; and so I was taken and led to the captain's tent, and one axe and one block was brought forth to have smitten off my head. Then master Poynings your brother, with other of my friends, came and said, that there should die an hundred or two, in case I died; and so by that means my life was saved at that time.’ 1 Fenn's Letters, p. 57. 59.

finding the attachment of their own followers not to be depended upon, removed from London to Killingworth, to keep them from joining the revolters.²⁶

London was now defenceless, except that lord Seales was appointed to guard the Tower; and Cade, thus encouraged, after beheading one of his officers for disobedience to his orders, on the 1st of July marched from Blackheath to Southwark, and slept there. On the same day, an insurrectionary multitude arrived at Mile-end from Essex,²⁷ to reinforce the Kentish insurgents.

Cade was not only supported by the general feeling of the people, but also by some of the superior classes. Besides those in the king's council, who enforced some of his demands, the duke of Exeter's herald and a gentleman of Norfolk, are mentioned as acting in his mob;²⁸ and at the common council, convened by the mayor of London, some advised the admission of the rebels into the city; and when an alderman opposed this approving measure, he was taken into custody.²⁹ The gates were opened to Cade. He hewed with his sword the ropes which upheld the drawbridge, to prevent deceit. He caused proclamations to be made in many parts in the king's name, that none on pain of death, should take any thing without paying for it. He rode thro the streets, struck the old London stone with his sword, exclaiming, "Now is Mortymer lord of this city;" and after arranging with the mayor for the disposition of his followers, he returned to Southwark.³⁰

CHAP.
V.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

²⁶ Feb. 450. W. Wyr. 470.

²⁷ Feb. 470.

²⁸ Payne's letter, 1 Fenn. 57. This letter gives a full detail of Cade's pillaging the writer's apartments in Southwark, p. 61.

²⁹ Feb. 450.

³⁰ Ib. 451.

BOOK
III.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

On 3d July, he entered the city again; sent for lord Say from the Tower, and had him arraigned at the Guildhall before the mayor and other justices. Say claimed to be judged by his peers. Hearing this demand, Cade sent a body of men who brought him by force to the standard in Cheapside, where they struck off his head and placed it on a long pole. At Mile-end, Crowmer, his son-in-law, the sheriff of Kent, was also beheaded as one of the extortioners complained of, and their heads were carried about in all the savage frenzy of mob-exultation.³¹

The city had up to this time favored them, but their first atrocities exciting an appetite for more, they began to plunder some of the citizens houses, and Cade even robbed where he had dined. This pleased the lowest orders, but alarmed the rest, and tho' it is intimated by the ancient chronicler of the city, that if Cade had not robbed, and had intended well, he might have brought his purpose to good effect; yet the respectable inhabitants, who desired the reformation of others, but not the pillage of themselves, dreading a general plunder, resolved to drive him out of London.³² They privately armed; concerted measures with the king's forces in the Tower, and, as it became dark, made a powerful attack on the main body of the rebel host, which was

³¹ Fab. 451. Stowe has transmitted to us in his MS. extracts and chronicle, one of Cade's arbitrary mandates for supplies; it is to Thomas Cooke in London, 'Ye shall charge all lumbards and strangers being merchants, Genoese, Venetians, Florentines, and others, *this day* to draw them together, and do ordain for us, 12 harness complete of the best fashion, 24 brigandynes, 12 battle axes, 12 gloves, 6 horses with saddles and bridles, and 1000 marks of ready money; and if this our demand be not observed, we shall have the heads of as many as we can get of them.' Harl. MSS. 545. Chiron. 388.

³² Fab. 452. Croyl. 526.

posted on the bridge. The struggle was obstinate, and lasted all night, with varying fortune. Many fell on both sides; but the position was at length forced, and Cade retreated.³³

The next day, some of the ministers held a conference with Cade at St. Margaret's church, and received the statement of his complaints. They delivered to him the king's pardon, for himself and his adherents, on the 9th of July, and he retired the same day to Dartmouth, and thence to Rochester. At Rochester, where he remained two days, his multitude began to quarrel about the booty they had taken; and which, having caused their defeat, now happily produced their dispersion. Cade, despairing of further unity and success, mounted his horse, and left them. A proclamation of one thousand marks, to all who would take him alive or dead, immediately pursued him.³⁴ The new sheriff of Kent, with others, followed his track, overtook him in an orchard, and slew him,³⁵ hopeless of mercy, and therefore desperate of life. His body was brought to London, and his head was placed on the bridge.³⁶ All the rebels retired home, as privately

³³ Fab. 452. W. Wyr. 471. The letter written in Fenn, v. 1. p. 61, mentions this conflict: 'I was up till the night that the battle was at London bridge; and then at night the captain put me out into the battle at the bridge, and there I was wounded and hurt near hand to death, and there I was six hours in the battle.'

³⁴ Stowe has preserved this. It recites that 'Cade was born in Ireland, had the year preceding lived in Sussex with sir Thomas Dagre; had there slain a woman with child, and had fled to a church for safety, and afterwards went abroad. That for years before this he had joined the French party and dwelt with them, and now came to England to enrich himself with robbing and despoiling the king's liege men.' Harl. MSS. 545, and Chron. 391. It is dated 10 July 1450.

³⁵ Rymer's *Fœdera* contains the order on the exchequer, dated 15 July, for the 1000 marks to Alexander Iden, and the others with him who had brought the body of Cade, 11. p. 275.

³⁶ Wyr. 472. Fab. 453. As he was afterwards attainted, his goods

BOOK
III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI

as they could ; but some were selected, seized, and punished.³⁷

In these tumultuary proceedings, the four most obnoxious ministers, Suffolk, Say, and the prelates of Chichester and Salisbury, had perished ; and if the revolt had arisen only from personal causes, the triumph of government would have made its future course tranquil and strong. But the moral causes of these movements continuing to agitate the public mind, the repression of that wild fury of the populace which benefited no one, produced no domestic peace. The old system of administration was persevered in, under new leaders ; and its opponents perceiving from the insurrections, a certainty of great popular support, prepared to begin that direct struggle for the possession of the government of the country, which produced the most destructive civil war that England has at any time experienced.

That Englishmen in general were speaking ill of their sovereign, and, by their bad language, seemed disposed to do him every outrage, and were debating who should be their king ; and that Henry was existing in a very doubtful balance of public opinion, at this period, are the observations of the duke of Orleans, who did not leave England till these angry feelings had begun.³⁸ Yet Henry was himself never personally unpopular ; it was the administration of the queen, of the cardinal, and her ecclesiastical ministry ; of their pupil or creature the duke of Suffolk, and afterwards of Somerset, and the new

and lands declared forfeited, and his blood corrupted by act of parliament, which gives some material dates. Rolls Parl. v. 5. 224. He seems not to have been a common man.

³⁷ Fab. 453.

³⁸ See the last stanza but one in his ballad, inserted before in this volume, p. 29.

favorites who succeeded to the same principles, and pursued the same measures, which put the crown into this peril ; and finally shook it from the head of this good, mild, virtuous, religious, unoffending ; but governed, and badly-governed, because wife-governed, church-governed, favorite-governed, and selfish-courtier-governed, king. The direction and counsels of an intelligent woman would have added credit to his reign ; but Margaret allied herself with a party, and was ruled by favorites of inadequate worth and capacity. They misgoverned her, and she misgoverned him ; and all of them misgoverned the country.

In every European monarchy, the great aristocracies of birth, talent, and property, sometimes directly, oftener insensibly, but always powerfully, influence, control, and shape the conduct of the government. Their aim, with a certain regard to their own interests as individuals, is usually the public good ; because reason naturally loves what is best, and pursues, as far as it can discern it ; and what is most profitable for all, is ultimately most beneficial to each. Wise sovereigns act on the same principles ; and then, between the crown on an able head, and the most improved part of the community, there is an harmony of feeling, and a coalition of action, which produce a peaceful and distinguished reign. An intelligent minister, by pursuing the same system, creates the same results, if the royal capacity be, as in Henry VI. in an infirm state ; but weak sovereigns have usually been remarkable for breaking this natural link between the royal mind, and the intellect, feeling, wealth, and nobility of the country. Inferior and inexperienced persons get into their

BOOK III. confidence, produce, for their own purposes, a jealousy of the aristocracy and property of the country ; and by selfish rapacity, ambition, impatience, and misgovernment, plunge the crown into a state of irretrievable unpopularity with all classes of its subjects.

**REIGN OF
HENRY VI.**

That the queen's father should advise her not to suffer herself and the king to be the wards of others,^{*} came too late to do good, and operated only to do mischief. The ecclesiastical statesmen, as we have already seen, had made the king their dependant ward, and had excluded him from that active share of efficient government which would have educated him to have governed better. He was already in their wardship when Margaret came ; and the question for her to decide was, whether she would end that state of subservient pupillage which had broken his spirit, weakened his mind, and made him ignorant of all state affairs, and therefore averse from them ; and by connecting him more generally and liberally with his nobility, and with the intellectual classes of his kingdom, have made his name loved, and his reign honored : or become herself his political duenna, and the actual sovereign of the country, by a degrading and unwise combination with the very persons who had debilitated her husband, and were uprooting his popularity. She preferred to make her ministers her minions, and to join those she ought to have removed, and to begin a steady and haughty warfare against the nobility and constitution of the country, that the arbitrary power of the crown, and of her favorites, might be established.

* See before, p. 29.

All that has survived to us of the complaints of the nation, at this time, converge to these points. Gloucester's last memorial against Winchester; the papers of the insurrectionists under Cade; the private correspondence of the Paston family; the records of parliament; the public papers of the Warwick and Yorkist party; and the narratives and remarks of our old chroniclers, shew, that the circumstances we have lamented were among the most active causes of the sanguinary distractions of the country. The queen and her favorites, like Edward II. pitched the crown against the nobility, law, and constitution of the country, and produced the hurricanes that injured all.

CHAP.
V.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

The remarks of an Oxford chancellor who lived at this period, and died before the deposition of Henry, may be cited as the evidence of an intelligent contemporary, of the real or imputed misconduct of the queen's administration.⁴⁰

In one passage, Dr. Gascoigne informs us, that the pulpit itself had been directed against government. "The bad lords and bishops, in 1449 and 1450, declared, that the preachers of the word of God disturbed the people, and caused insurrections. Yet these preachers were men famous in life and science, and only preached against vices and sins, and against the insatiable cupidity of the king's council, and of the bishops and others, and against the deficiency of public justice, and against the promotion of the very worst persons in the church and public offices. And because they preached against these

⁴⁰This is the same MS. work which we have before cited, Ch. II. p. 39. As I have not had an opportunity of consulting the MS. at Oxford; I quote the MS. excerpta from it by R. James, in the Cotton library, Vitell. c. 9. Dr. Gascoigne died in 1459.

BOOK III. evils, which were sufficient to disturb the kingdom, and deserved the divine punishment, they were called ‘disturbers,’ by those who supported the king, and by various bishops. Their reproachers said, ‘Thou hast disturbed England, and vexed divers persons by the evils thou hast caused.’”⁴¹

REIGN OF HENRY VI.

In another part he mentions, that in 1450, and before, “Many persons told Henry VI. that famous preachers, doctors, by their preaching against the sins used in his privy council, caused insurrections among the people against him. Yet the public injuries and the annual taxes and tithes, and the alienation of the goods of the crown, and the want of justice from the judges of the church and kingdom, were so manifest, and so numerous, that if these preachers wished to have been silent, the very stones, that is, the popular multitude, would have cried out.”⁴²

It seems, that sermons to this purport were sometimes addressed to the king himself; for the doctor mentions, that “Lord Say, with others, would not suffer any one to preach before the king, unless they saw his written sermon first, or unless he would swear not to preach against his ministers’ actions or councils.”⁴³

He expressly declares, that the insurrections in 1450 were directed against the church, as well as the government. After mentioning, that Reginald Peacock, whom the duke of Suffolk promoted to the

⁴¹ MSS. Vitell. c. 9. p. 155. referring to Gascoigne’s MS. p. 578.

⁴² MS. Vitell. p. 156. Gasc. MS. p. 507: he gives the names of some of those preachers. ‘The most famed ones were G. Wurthyngton, rector of St. Andrews, Holborn; W. Lythfield, rector of All Saints, London; Magister Petrus de Beverley, alias Herforth; some doctors of reputation for their lives and knowlege at Cambridge; and Dr. Th. Eburhall, of Oxford, then master of the College of Wyttington.’ MSS. ib.

⁴³ MS. Vitell. p. 157.

mitre, publicly taught, that bishops were not bound to preach because they were bishops ; and that all the bishops of England favored, or did not oppose him ; Gascoigne adds, “and immediately afterwards, insurrections overflowed against the church, and against the king of England, by thousands of men, who said, ‘The ecclesiastics destroy us ; they live luxuriously on their property, while we are perishing with want ; and they have destroyed the king by their flattery, or silence.’ This was the public voice ; and the duke of Suffolk, bishop of Salisbury, and lord Say, were killed by the common people, in 1450.”⁴⁴

CHAP.
V.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

Other paragraphs aver the same facts. “ From the time the bishop favored Peacock, then in the see of St. Asaph, for preaching that bishops were not bound to preach because they were bishops, and that they did not sin in giving annates, or first fruits, to the Pope, many rose up in insurrection, spoiling and killing several persons, and speaking the worst things of the clergy, who live on the goods of the church. Thus the insurgents said, ‘ The pluralities of churches, the appropriations in the monasteries and collegiate churches, the non-residence of prelates and rectors in their cures, and the unworthy promotion of immoral young men in the church, whom I myself knew to be unable to pronounce Latin, and who did not even receive their own revenues, but sent their servants to take and spend them : these evils, and the famous proclamantes, destroy the good government of the church, and of souls.’ ”⁴⁵ He adds, with an angry feeling, but with a foresight

⁴⁴ MS. Vitell. p. 156. Gasc. MSS. 507.

⁴⁵ MS. Vitell. p. 157.

BOOK III. of consequences, which events soon proved to be sagacious : “ Bishops now do not preach, either vocally or by example ; but God will himself preach in action, by bringing on them, and other offenders, heavy punishments.”⁴⁶ His displeasure that the prelates forsook the pulpits seems to have arisen from a perception, that the new neglect arose from luxurious indolence, and was producing that public obloquy, against which no power can stand.

REIGN OF HENRY VI.
The public objections to the conduct of government.

Dr. Gascoigne gives us some important information, as to the vicious system of government then pursued by its ministers ; or, at least, as to the popular belief and complaint of it.

1st. As to their management of parliaments, to compel the unwilling commons to grant subsidies :

After remarking, that they and the courtiers lived on royal grants, and on the taxes raised from the people, and on the tenths granted by the clergy, he proceeds ; “ They cause the king to appoint the parliaments to meet in small cities, remote from the confines of the kingdom, that from want of good house-room and victuals, few may attend ; and that lawyers might be absent, who would advise the commons ; and they so prorogue parliament, and so long keep it continuing, that by their great and daily expenses, the poor members of the commons, who remain there, may be compelled to grant what the king desires, however wrong and destructive to the kingdom it may be. And the root of this evil, is the avarice of those who hold the superior offices in the realm.”⁴⁷

2d. He exhibits the Suffolk ministry as enriching themselves with the public money.

⁴⁶ MS. Vit. 157.

⁴⁷ Ib. 155. Gasc. MSS. 578.

“ The new counsellors of the king are very greedy, and care not what they do, if they can obtain honors and worldly affluence. They have enriched themselves, and by their assenting have so acted, that the king has given away to others, and their heirs, all the crown revenues. Hence he has not the means of living, unless by the parliamentary subsidies ; and altho he owes 1,500,000*l.* he has nothing by which he can pay the debt.

C H A P.
V.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

“ Yet these counsellors, whom he has made lords, out of boys, advise earnestly the king not to resume his grants, tho the parliament has strongly petitioned him to do so. But these bad advisers tell him, that it would be a great disgrace and evil to make this resumption. Therefore he will not comply with the wishes of the parliament, tho he has no livelihood nor fund to discharge his debts, but what he can collect from the people.

“ If the king ever becomes angry with any of his servants for detected falsehood, he forgets the fault the next day, and praises and obeys the false counsellor, as if he had never done wrong.”⁴⁸

⁴⁸ MS. Vit. p. 155. Gasc. MS. 579. It may be interesting to add his account of Cade's insurrection, as it was written at or near the time of its occurrence. During the parliament at Leicester, the commonalty of Kent rose up, and called themselves the public seekers to do public justice, and the proclaimers of their own, and the kingdom's injury. While these were insurgent, the parliament ended, which had been long continued at London and Leicester, that the commons, weighed down by expences and labors might consent to certain requests of the king, and to certain taxes which he asked; but these were not granted; for it was said, publicly, that unless the commons consented to the proposed articles, the parliament should not finish. But the commons of that parliament, endured more threats from the king and from his young counsellors. They were commanded by the king to proceed with the articles, which were to provide money to defend Normandy; and that they should not intermeddle with the actions of the king and his lords. But this parliament, tho daily harassed by expences and labors, yet said openly, that they would never grant a tax to the king, till he resumed all the appurtenances

BOOK
III.
REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

These remarks display the strong feeling of a person dissatisfied with the measures of the Suffolk administration; but being penned at the time, they exhibit the sentiments by which, those, who were discontented with the government, were influenced in their opposition to it.⁵⁹

The death of Cade and the ministers did not immediately tranquillize the nation. The public mind continued to be turbulent; and foreseeing men must have looked forward to an agitated futurity.⁶⁰ But

to his crown, which he had alienated. Before the complete decision of these, the commons of Kent rose up under their captain *John Cade*, a bastard, descended from Roger Mortimer. He, after the king's pardon to him, and his, betrayed by one of his servants, as it is said, was mortally wounded, and brought dead to London, in July 1450; and in that month and year, the English were expelled from Normandy.

⁵⁹ Dr. Gascoigne, under the word 'Promotio,' in his Dictionary, and in a note, in calc'e Cod. Bodl. NE. A 5. 1, gives this account of himself. After mentioning, that he had⁶¹ the prebend of eight marks in the cathedral of Welles, he says, 'Cardinal Kemp gave me a collation to the chancellorship of York, but I never had it. In 1445 I was appointed rector of St. Peter, Cornhill. The lord mayor and aldermen gave me the living, and, tho' infirm, I accepted their presentation, hoping to be well soon, and to reside there in person, and to fulfil the duty of a pastor, or else meaning to resign. But my infirmity continuing, so that I could not hasten thither from Oxford, I, R. Gascoigne, Dr. Theol. and chancellor of Oxford, gave in my resignation. For St. Edmund, archbishop of Canterbury, never held any living unless he could personally reside there. Alas! alas! alas! the absence of a good pastor makes and causes many evils, as that of a pilot from a ship.' Under 'Peccatum,' he mentions, 'I resigned, of my own accord, my only rectory of Dighton to Dr. Th. Eborall, because he was more fit than myself to travel and preach in our diocese of York.' He died 13 March 1450. Tanner Bib. Monast. 311. His Dictionarium is in Coll. Linc. Oxford, in two large volumes.

⁶⁰ In August 1450, a person writes, 'Lord Moleyns had sore labored in his country to appease and still the people there, to restrain them from rising; and so he was daily laboring thereabouts in the king's service.' He also mentions a report, that 9 or 10,000 men were up in Wiltsshire. Fenn, v. 91. In October, sir John Falstafie wrote to the king, that Suffolk stood right wildly, p. 99; and lord Oxford, in the following winter, reminds the sheriff of Norfolk, 'what indisposition the commons of both countries were of, in the end of last summer,' p. 107. But he adds, what proves that the public complained of real grievances, 'I were loath to labor further, unless the commons should be eased, as God's law would.' Ib.

as the remarks of the Oxford chancellor imply, that oppositions to the ecclesiastical state and system of conduct, were among the disturbing forces that acted on the country, this important subject may next claim our careful consideration.

CHAP.
V.
REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

C H A P. VI.

Review of the State of the English Papal Hierarchy at this period.—The different Attacks made upon it.—The Reformations urged; and its retaliated Hostilities, and Persecutions on those who criticized and opposed it.

BOOK
III.

IN a subsequent volume, some of the attacks will be alluded to, which were made on the papal church establishment in England, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.¹ But the church, at that time, possessed above half the knights fees; that is, of the great landed property, and military tenures of England, besides tithes and personal goods, official dues, and perpetual benefactions.² Hence as they had larger power in the state, and greater wealth than any other single order of the community, and were superior to either the king, or the aristocracy, taken separately, they were not to be shaken, if at all, without a convulsion of the whole country. They saw and felt the danger that had arisen to them, from the union of the crown and nobility, under the reigns of Edward III. and Richard II.; and to prevent its continuance, made that alliance with the house of Lancaster, which deposed Richard; and under Henry IV., Henry V., and Henry VI., enabled them to pursue a system of persecution, imprisonment, and burning, that kept all reformation at bay till the reign

See the 5th volume of this Work.

The knights fees were 53,215. And of these the clergy held 28,000.
Ib. p. 413.

of Henry VIII.; but which contributed materially to the civil wars between the Yorkists and the Lancastrians, by supplying continually the fuel of discontent. As this important period of our history has not been contemplated with these considerations; and we have now approached the time, when the dismal contests began, it will be useful to take a concise view of the state of warfare, into which the mind of the country became agitated against what was called in that day the *possessored* church; the church, with its legal and established property, and pecuniary rights; of the attacks which were made resolutely upon it from various quarters; and of its own, as determined, and vindictive efforts in its defence. When the facts which we shall notice, are duly weighed, it will surprise no one, that the civil wars, which spilt so much English blood in the reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV., should have occurred. We shall feel, that our ancestors were not absurd enough to sacrifice life and comfort, to determine whether one descendant of Edward III., or another, had the best of two remote and doubtful rights to the crown. The cause which gave them supporters, and furnished so much supplies to the civil war, was that collision between the great contending interests in the country, which, at this time, were existing in active and irreconcileable hostility; and which, from the sacrifices of pride, power, influence, and property, that each had to submit to before either could be at peace, no other decision than that of the sword, could ultimately terminate. The sword was fiercely called in by both the antagonist parties, to contest and determine the mighty questions. Its first operations were to change the dynasty of the crown, tho' not the monarchical

CHAP.
VI.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

BOOK III. constitution ; and to strike down the great nobility of the country. The church survived to enjoy the temporary victory, but only to fall itself when its own triumph united the crown, the subdued aristocracy, and the resenting people against it, under that monarch, who, after obtaining at first the title of its Defender, consented to its spoil and overthrow, as soon as his own passions could be made to concur with the general feeling and long cherished wishes of the majority of his nation.³

It was the property and conduct of the clergy, which constituted their real danger. The ambition, pride, and luxury of their prelates, fixed the eye of angry criticism on their envied opulence, and on its abuse ; and roused both avarice and reason to dispossess them of it.⁴

These hostile feelings were planting themselves deeply in the bosom of the thinking public, in the beginning of the fourteenth century. W. Occam, an Englishman, one of the great doctors of the schoolmen, displays them in his dialogue, between a knight and an ecclesiastic, written at that time.⁵ The latter begins with complaining, how much the rights of the church were invaded, and what wrong the clergy endured against all law. To the knight's question, "What law ?" the other answers, the ordinances of the popes, and the decrees of the fathers. The

³ Spain appears to be now in a state something similar to what England was in the fifteenth century. Her clergy, when her late commotions began, enjoyed above half the property of the country ; and are waging the same conflict in it, thro which our ancestors had to pass.

⁴ See the remarks and quotation in this Hist. Eng. v. 5.

⁵ About 1305. It is intitled, 'Disputatio super potestate prelatis ecclesiarum atque principibus terrarum commissa.' And is printed in Goldasti Monarchica. He was a scholar of our Duns Scotus. An old English translation of his work was published, from which Oldys gives some important extracts in his British Librarian, p. 5.

knight allows, that these may be authorities to the clergy, but not to the laity ; and intimates, that he had therefore laughed, when Pope Boniface VIII. had, by a new statute then lately made, declared himself to be above all secular princes and kingdoms. He admits, that they who conduct the worship of the Deity, should have every necessary ; but no temporal kingdom or lordships ; and reminds his opponent, that our Saviour and St. Paul compares his order to workmen, to hired persons, and to laboring oxen ; and that these are not lords of things.⁶ He expresses broadly his own conviction, that they were only upheld by the royal power. “ If the authority of the king were to fail you, what would be your repose ? would not the poor and prodigal nobles, if they should consume their own property, turn to yours ? therefore the royal hands are your bulwark : the king’s peace is your peace ; the king’s safety is your safety.” With a sarcasm on both themselves, and their supporters, he adds : “ It is because kings and princes, at their own expense and dangers, defend you and expose themselves gratuitously to death for your sake ; that you repose under your shades, eat splendidly, drink joyously, lie down on ornamented beds, sleep quietly, and wanton with soft instruments of music. You, therefore, are the only lords. The kings and princes are but your servants.”⁷ When the clergyman claims what he possesses, as the property of God,⁸ and accuses the layman of meaning to invade that, he answers, “ We mean not

CHAP.
VI.
REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

⁶ Occam’s Dial. Oldy’s Brit. Lib. p. 7.

⁷ Occ. Disp. Gold. Mon. p. 16.

⁸ This title was early given to church possessions, with great ingenuity. In the most ancient Anglo-Saxon law that was made, they are called ‘Godes feoh.’ Wilk. Leg. Sax. p. 1.

BOOK III. to revoke what was given to the Supreme, but to apply it to those uses for which the gift was made.”⁹

REIGN OF HENRY VI. The churchman desires him to leave them in peace. “No,” exclaims the knight, “we are to see the wills of our forefathers fulfilled, who gave these temporalities so plentifully, that you should dispose of them to charitable purposes ; to the health of our souls ; to the honor of God ; to praying for the dead ; and to relieving the wants of the living.” He reminds him again, that they are spending their wealth in sinful deeds of vanity, instead of distributing it in acts of mercy to the poor, to the sick, the diseased, and the oppressed ; and adds this emphatic warning, “and if ye do not so, THEN MUST WE HAVE TO DO THEREWITH.”¹⁰

The clergy did not lessen their splendor and enjoyments ; and the gentlemen of England became more eager for their possessions. The knights were afterwards classed with the Lollards, for their hostility against the monastic orders.¹¹

The government was interested to countenance the pomp and worldly expenditure of the church, because it added to the state of the court ; and lessened the consequence, means, and popularity of an order which then wanted to tower above all others. But from the constitution of the English parliament, the command of the legislation of the country was

⁹ Gold. p. 16.

¹⁰ Oldys, p. 8. Oldys has remarked, that Occam attacked vigorously John XXIII. and gave a mortal wound to the Pope's temporal power over princes. He obtained a protector in Louis of Bavaria. The Pope excommunicated him, and he was condemned at Paris for an heretic, and his books were burnt. Luther was familiar with his works. He was the only schoolman whom this reformer valued. Oldys, p. 5.

¹¹ Thus a MS. in the Cotton library, has ‘ad verecundiam Lollardorum presentis temporis et militum detrahentium, qui satis infesti sunt, his diebus, ordini monachorum.’ MS. Claud. E 4. p. 330.

connected with the possession of its landed property. Hence, to prevent this from being gradually absorbed by the growing opulence of the church, the acts called the Statutes of Mortmain, were passed under one of our most sagacious kings, which made void all future donations to them of landed property.¹² These enactments precluded any further territorial aggrandizement. But the pious feelings of the truly religious, and the anxieties of those who wished to atone for the possession and abuse of every earthly good; or to secure the next world, after the full enjoyment of the present, still continued to pour their disposable affluence on the church. That property thus bestowed, ensures heaven to the bestower, has been not only the doctrine, but also the belief of many sacerdotal establishments in every age and country of the world; and will be so while property exists, and state and luxury are valued.¹³ Hence the clergy, in some or other of their branches, continued to increase in wealth and in its display, while the censorious and craving rapacity of the laity, as steadily followed its expected prey.¹⁴

CHAP.
VI.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

¹² Stat. 7 Edw. I; 13 Ed. I. c. 32; and 15 R. II. c. 5. An exception was made in favor of the crown, by 18 E. III. st. 3. c. 3; which has been finally adjusted by 7 and 8 Will. III. c. 37.

¹³ That the clergy did not hypocritically teach the duty or efficacy of testamentary distributions for pious uses, but themselves really believed and felt what they taught, we perceive by their own wills and conduct. The cardinal of Winchester begins his will, by stating, that he desires to transmute his terrestrial goods into heavenly ones, and to dispose of his property for the salvation of his soul. Royal Wills, p. 321. Some of our most munificent foundations of charity and learning, have arisen from testamentary dispositions of the wealthy clergy. The highest ranks of the laity had the same impression. Hence Henry the Sixth's splendid establishments of Eton College, and King's College, Cambridge; on which see Parl. Rolls, v. 5. p. 75-102.

¹⁴ The anxiety of all the great and wealthy laity, to have masses said for their souls, either from love of pomp or from an alarmed feeling, as to the other world, appears in their wills; and was perpetually raining down money on some of the religious classes. Thus the countess of

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

The danger which always impended over the crown, from a proud, jealous, vindictive, insubordinate, independent, warlike, high-spirited, self-estimating, powerful, and irritable nobility, usually kept the throne united with the church. And if the latter had not been goaded by the papal see, to support its extravagant claim to universal and imperial domination; and had been more willing to have let the sovereign occasionally share some portion of their revenues, the unity might never have been broken. All establishments left to themselves, tend to subside into the peaceful apathy of contented self-enjoyment. But the government occasionally wanted money, and the clergy resisted taxation. When the Pope threatened or issued excommunications, he called upon the prelates to support him, on pain of their excommunication. And as none of our sovereigns reigned without some disputes with the papal chair, it became as expedient for the crown, for its own safety, to clip the beak and talons, and wings of its church establishment, as to bruise the power of its fierce nobility.

Contests
of the
crown
with the
church
and Pope.

Of the determination with which our ancient kings sometimes attacked the church, we have a remarkable instance in 1269, while Occam was flourishing.

March gives one prior 10 marcs, to another 60 shillings, and to every canon of the priory, 40 shillings, to pray for her soul; and 200*l.* for keeping her anniversary, besides other valuable legacies. Royal Wills, p. 98. The earl March, her son, left 1000*l.* to an abbey, to be employed in the same manner; besides all their plate and furniture to several chapels; and 40*l.* each to three abbeys; and 40 marcs each to 21 other religious houses, to pray for his soul and his wife's; 20 marcs to three others; 20*l.* to one nunnery, and 40 marcs to two others, to pray for his soul, and for all Christians for a year. Ib. 105-111. The earl of Arundel authorizes his executors, to apply a sum, not exceeding 1000 marcs, for his soul; besides 400 marcs, for singing for him and his lady at Lewes; and 100 to the church at Chichester. Ib. 121-8. Also, 20*l.* to another; 16*l.* to another; and 40*l.* each to four others; p. 135. Besides legacies of plate and garments. Almost every will has bequests of this sort.

Edward I. then requested aid from both laity and clergy, for his war against France, on account of Gascony. The convocation divided itself into four bodies. The bishops; the deans and archdeacons; the abbots and priors; and the representatives of the parochial ministers. Each consulted apart, and decided to give no contribution; and made a bull of Boniface, anathematizing all who submitted to such payments, their public excuse. The king, upon consulting his parliament, a few days after, issued what the chronicler reasonably calls "a cruel edict," against the clergy, without any exception of persons or dignities. He sent writs to the sheriffs, and seized and confiscated all the lands, goods, and property of the clergy, of every description. He had a written list made out, of every acre they possessed, and the value of all their estates, and taxed them accordingly. None could get back their property, without due submission, and paying also such a fine as he imposed; and they who did not submit, were treated as outlaws and traitors, and could get no redress in the courts of law, for any injury which any layman chose to do them. This attack is declared to have made the clergy the opprobrium of men, and the contempt of the people.¹⁵ It certainly pointed out to the great laity, the fat deer that was to be chased; and broke down that wall of veneration which had so long protected their possessions, as the property of the Supreme.

CHAP.
VI.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

The two succeeding Edwards, and the second Richard, had felt themselves obliged to concur with the passions of the community, in curtailing, by slow degrees, the power of the church. Yet still, when

¹⁵ Hearne's Chron. de Dunstable, p. 652-4.

BOOK III. the crown applied to it for money, the usual answer was returned, that it was too poor. Thus, in 1425, a subsidy was asked to support the duke of Bedford in his French war. The clergy refused it, on the allegation of their poverty.¹⁶ These refusals, at the time they were exhibiting the most ostentatious luxury, compelled the government to look critically upon that, and to coincide with the call of society for its correction. It was clear, that what was spent for individual purposes, could not be contributed to the state; and therefore, even Henry the Fifth, who supported them so steadily, as to destroy his military friend sir John Oldcastle, for their sake, and to witness himself the burning of a poor heretic,¹⁷ ordered an inquiry into the parade and exorbitances of the Benedictine monks, and had restrictions enacted,¹⁸ and he urged by his ambassadors at Constance, extensive reformation in the church. So, when in 1419, he applied to them for a subsidy to aid him in his war, and to pay for those who should be sent to Constance; he required also, the defects reigning among the clergy to be reformed.¹⁹ This addition was perhaps found to be the most efficacious means of obtaining the taxation. His concession to them, was, his permitting the convocation to arrest and persecute several heretics.²⁰

As the Pope and the crown were competitors in

¹⁶ Wilk. Concil. v. 3.

¹⁷ Hist. Mid. Ages, v. 2. p. 468.

¹⁸ The bishop of Exeter, from the king, made various propositions as to their excesses and abuses. Croyl. 514. See the process in the years 1422 and 1423, in Wilk. Conc. v. 3. p. 413-26. One restriction imposed, expresses emphatically, the assumed pomp, that it was felt necessary to lessen. Their superiors were not to ride out with more than 20 horses, including baggage; nor with gilt reins. Ib.

¹⁹ 3 Wilk. 393.

²⁰ As R. Walker; Rad. Owtrede; W. Browne; and R. Wyche. Ib. 394, 5.

exacting money from the clergy, this “*irritamentum mali*,” as Ovid felt it to be; this “root of all evil,” as the apostle pronounces it, induced the crown from the reign of Edward I., to be steady in its efforts, to diminish the papal power and influence in England. The two statutes, of *quare impedit* and *premunire facias*, had this direct tendency.²¹

CHAP.
VI.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

Edward III. pursued the policy of his father and grandfather; and in 1343, when Clement VI. made provision for two of his cardinals, out of vacant benefices in England, to the amount of 2000 marcs, besides their prelacies and abbies, the king drove their collecting agents out of the kingdom;²² and soon after published that celebrated letter to the Pope, asserting the liberty of the English church.²³

It became so unpopular, both at court, and in the nation, for the English clergy to seek, as formerly, patronage from the papal see, that one who had obtained a bull for the see of Winchester;²⁴ and afterwards, another who had a similar one for the see of Ely,²⁵ were forced publicly to renounce their foreign appointments, as prejudicial to the crown. The

²¹ The first statute against papal provisions was made, 31 Edw. I., and was the foundation of all the subsequent statutes of *premunire*. Coke, 2 Inst. 583. The chapter in Blackstone's Commentaries on this subject, l. 4. c. 8, will give the reader full information upon it. Several statutes were enacted in Edw. the Third's reign, against provisors, as 25 Edw. III. st. 6.; 27 Edw. III. st. 1. c. 1.; 38 Edw. III. st. 1. c. 4, and st. 2. c. 1, 2, 3, 4. These enact, that the court of Rome shall not present or collate to any bishopric or living in England; that the king, or his subjects, shall not be cited to answer at Rome; and that king John's donation of vassalage and annual rent to the Pope, was null and void. All the temporal nobility and commons engaged, that if the Pope should endeavor to maintain these usurpations, they would resist him with all their power. Seld. Flet. 10. 4. Blackst. l. 4. c. 8.

²² Harl. MSS. N° 7048. p. 228: A neat selection of the most important facts in the MS. collection of documents in Cleop. E 2. and others.

²³ Ib.²⁴ 20 Edw. III. Harl. MSS. 229. Cotton MSS. Cleop. E 2.²⁵ 36 Edw. III. ib. Cleop. ib.

BOOK III. ministers of Edward III. had such little deference to the feelings of the pontiff, that in 1374, they appointed Wicliffe one of the ambassadors to him from the king;²⁶ and the commons exhibited such a diminution of former veneration to the church as to petition, that no ordinance should be made on the application of the clergy, without assent of parliament; and that no one should be bound by any of their constitutions made for their own advantage.²⁷

**REIGN OF
HENRY VI.**

But it was the property and power, not the doctrines of the church, against which the government pressed. When the clergy were disposed to be liberal with their temporalities, the crown supported their spiritual opinions. Hence even under Richard II., in 1381, a statute against Lollardy was passed,²⁸ and the king sent letters to Oxford in the following year, to search out and expel heretics, and to seize the books of John Wicliffe and Nicholas Herford.²⁹ Carmelites were sent down by the archbishop, to enforce this mandate; when the chancellor resisted, to be himself accused of heresy for the opposition;³⁰ and Richard II. was, five years afterwards, applauded by Urban VI., for his zeal against heretics and schism.³¹

But altho in this year the king's commissioners went to the corporation of Nottingham, to obtain and bring to the council the heretical books of Herford, and of Wicliffe, then lately dead;³² yet, before two years had elapsed, we find an act of parliament made against the provisions and reservations of the Pope;³³ and a letter to him from the king and lords, justifying

²⁶ Harl. MSS. 229. Cleop. E 2.

²⁷ 51 Ed. III. Harl. MSS. 239. Cleop. E. 2.

²⁸ Stat. 5 R. II. ²⁹ Harl. MSS. 233. ³⁰ Ib.

³¹ 11 Rich. II. Harl. jb. ³² Ib. ³³ Stat. 13 Rich. II.

the hostile statute.³⁴ A clergyman was publicly forbidden to make any application to Rome, for the archdeaconry of Durham.³⁵ The king issued letters to prohibit every English bishop from collecting money for the Pope, without leave of parliament;³⁶ and in 1391, at Whitsuntide, ordered all beneficed clergy, that were at the Roman court, to return home by Michaelmas, under the penalty of deprivation;³⁷ tho at the same time he granted writs to enable the bishops to throw heretics into prison.³⁸ Thus the conscience was surrendered to the church; but the battle was strenuous for the golden fleece.

This distinction was repeatedly marked and maintained under the remainder of the reign of this unrespected sovereign. He ordered the chancellor of Oxford not to permit Friar Crampe to exercise his scholastic acts against the Catholic faith.³⁹ He commanded the mayor and sheriffs of London, to repress the conventicles of Lollards⁴⁰ in the metropolis. He received complaints against the mayor of Northampton, for favoring heresy and heretics;⁴¹ and he desired the Oxonian university, to consult by what methods heresies and schisms might be extirpated.⁴² Yet at the same time he sent his writ, forbidding papal bulls to be admitted, exempting the scholars from the jurisdiction of the bishops.⁴³ This mercenary and double-dealing conduct of his administration, aggravated his general misgovernment, and set the national mind in fatal hostility against him. His abetting the church, in their attacks on the right of conscience and freedom of opinion,

CHAP.
VI.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

³⁴ Harl. MSS. 233.

³⁵ Ib.

³⁶ Ib.

³⁷ Ib. 229.

³⁸ Ib. 234.

³⁹ Ib.

⁴⁰ Ib.

⁴¹ Ib.

⁴² Ib.

⁴³ Ib.

BOOK III. made all the conscientious, the intelligent, the liberal in sentiment, and the objectors to ecclesiastical tyranny, his enemies; while his resistance to the Pope's asserted power, and his claims on the church property, alienated both the clergy and their foreign sovereign from his throne.

**REIGN OF
HENRY VI.**

Richard became useless to the establishment in proportion as he was unpopular; and it abandoned and assisted to depose him. The archbishop of Canterbury went in person to invite Henry IV. to invade;⁴⁴ and the prince began his reign under the patronage of the possessioned clergy, and as their ally; and the severest statute that had yet passed against Lollards, was soon enacted.⁴⁵

So singular was the complexity of interests, which were now arising into mischievous contention, that the clergy were even obliged to resist their great bulwark, the Pope; and to support the government in its contests against him. His exactions of money produced this hostile conduct, as already noticed, in the thirteenth century.⁴⁶ Their resentment at his impositions, blinded them to the perception, that he could not be depreciated, and they be secure; and in the fifteenth century, they began vigorously to attack him. Paulus Anglicus, in 1404, wrote his *Aureum Speculum* pointedly against him.⁴⁷ In 1408, R. Ullerstone was urged, by the bishop of Salisbury, to a

⁴⁴ Hist. Eng. v. 2. p. 322.

⁴⁵ See Statutes of the Realm, v. 2. p. 125.

⁴⁶ Hist. Eng. v. 2. p. 117, 118.

⁴⁷ It is printed by Goldastus, in his *Monarchia*, v. 1. p. 1527. It contains a dialogue between Peter and Paul, 'de insolentis et erroribus Romanæ curiæ,' p. 1528. He says, a century before Luther, 'I will detect the most grievous errors of the Roman court, about the provisions of benefices, and the grants of indulgencies, and will condemn them with the simoniacal transactions. I will declare all the Roman court to be erroneous, and to be laboring under a state of damnation.'

work as inimical, in which he not only declared in express terms, that “ no nation of the faith under heaven, is so noted for inexorable and insatiable avarice as the Roman court;” but extended his demands for reformation to most of the moral grievances which the church supported.⁴⁸ The celebrated W. Lyndwood,⁴⁹ was sent by the royal council at the accession of Henry VI. to the council at Basle; and in the king’s name preached against the pomp and arrogance of the Roman pontiffs, against appeals to them, and against their demand, that no king should acknowlege on earth a superior to themselves.⁵⁰ The Popes, on their part, endeavored to keep the English bishops their supporters against the king, and to nominate them accordingly. In 1422, on the archbishop of York’s death, the pontiff appointed, as his successor, the bishop of Lincoln, who was then on an embassy to him. The regent lords chose another prelate. To please them, Lincoln renounced the papal nomination. On hearing this, the Pope exclaimed, “ I thought he would have been a firm pillar; but I now see, that he is only a reed, easily shaken.”⁵¹

CHAP.
VI.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

The papal see, equally unaware of the unfriendly future, whose advance it was accelerating, if not producing, fought stoutly against both the English government and the English clergy. Tho the long-continued, and most unwisely repeated, competitions

⁴⁸ His book, *De Reformatione Ecclesiae*, discusses these subjects: the election of the Pope; simony; exemptions; dispensations; pluralities; appeals; abuses of privileges; the apostasy of clergymen intermeddling with secular affairs; extortions; the superfluous, sumptuous, and inordinate apparel of the clergy, and their households. See Wharton’s Add. to Cave, Hist. Liter. p. 74.

⁴⁹ He wrote the book that became a standard work, on the Constitutions of the Church. ⁵⁰ Whart. Cave, p. 84.

⁵¹ Walsingham MSS. Sloane, 1776.

BOOK
III.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

of rival popes, anathematizing each other, had been shaking the whole papal establishment to its foundations; and an Englishman, of great exertions against the heretics of his day, had disputed vigorously against two of these popes, as anti-popes;⁵² yet the successful and acknowledged one, while on the one hand he struggled fiercely, and repeatedly, with government, on the right of nominating the bishops of England,⁵³ on the other, attacked the English prelacy itself, in the person of the archbishop of Canterbury, in the year 1426.⁵⁴ Some pecuniary affairs seem to have been the secret cause, for it was after the departure from England, of the Pope's financial officer, that the archbishop thought it necessary to write to the pontiff, that some "detractors striving to embitter the sweetness of his paternal love," had suggested, that he and the duke of Gloucester were the chief impeders of ecclesiastical liberties in England.⁵⁵ The Pope, in answer, assures him, that until he received that letter, he had no idea, that the archbishop and the duke had been so hostile; but he commands him to labor for "a repeal of that execrable statute against ecclesiastical liberties,"⁵⁶ called the statute against provisors, which forbade any foreign ecclesiastic to have benefices in England. To get this restriction abolished, he wrote both to the prelate and to the parliament.⁵⁷ The bishops, the university of Oxford, and the temporal

⁵² This was Netter the Carmelite, in 1409.

⁵³ He would not sanction the person named by the English regency, and kept the mitre of York unoccupied for some years, till the duke of Bedford at last recommended another bishop. Wals. MSS. Sloane. In 1434, we find Henry VI. reproving a priest for accepting the Pope's nomination to the see of Worcester, and writing to his envoy at Rome, to prevent the Pope's filling up the vacant bishopric of Rochester. MSS. Cott. Lib. Cleop. E 3.

⁵⁴ The papers are in Wilk. Conc. v. 3. p. 471-487.

⁵⁵ Ib. p. 472. ⁵⁶ Ib. p. 474. ⁵⁷ Ib. 479, 480.

lords, interfered with him in defence of the archbishop.⁵⁸ In vain—the Pope suspended the head prelate of England,⁵⁹ and sent his collector to serve on him the sentence. The duke of Gloucester commissioned an esquire to arrest the bearer of the papal bulls. The king's writ was issued, forbidding them to be promulgated;⁶⁰ and the archbishop appealed against the arbitrary pontiff.⁶¹ The house of commons supported their injured prelate.⁶²

While the king and pope, as their interests excited, were thus attacking the church; and by so doing, were sanctioning and increasing the hostile feelings, that were diffusing thro society against it; the house of commons took occasion to express and enforce some of these sentiments in the third year after Henry VI. had acceded.

The year 1425 was peculiarly marked by its complaints against the conduct of the clergy. In one petition it represented, that there were many chapels sufficiently endowed and annexed to parish churches, in various parts; and accustomed to have service performed, which were then tortiously withheld from their sacred use, by the parochial parsons or vicars.⁶³ In another remonstrance it stated, that from the non-residence of the clergy on their parsonages, and for lack of priests to do divine service, children had died unchristened; burials had been delayed, and pregnant women had perished. That in some parish kyrks, scarcely three masses were said in a week;

⁵⁸ The papers are in Wilk. Conc. v. 3. p. 476-8.

⁵⁹ See his bull, ib. 484. ⁶⁰ Ib. p. 486. ⁶¹ Ib. 485.

⁶² They petitioned the king in parliament on the subject, and prayed, that the Pope's proceedings for what he called the liberties of Rome in England, might be 'casser.' Rolls Parl. v. 4. p. 322.

⁶³ Rolls Parl. v. 4. p. 290.

BOOK
III.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

and in some not one. That altho the old custom was, that a third part of the goods of holy church should be expended in each parish, upon its poor and needy; yet that now all that could be raised, was carried away from it to the parsons, wherever they were. That if a poor man took any penny of his tithing, he was denied the sacrament; and that sermons were not preached, and no manner of knowing good doctrine was supplied. It prayed a compulsion of residence, on pain of forfeiting half the profits.⁴⁴

The object and spirit of the commons were visibly directed to depreciate and attack the church establishment, as far as in its then state of power they could safely venture; for in another petition they reminded the sovereign, that their ancestors had apprized Richard II., that the cathedral churches, colleges, abbeys, priories, and other benefices of his kingdom, had been founded and richly endowed, in order that they might be given to honest and suitable persons, to serve and honor God more loyally; to maintain hospitalities; to inform and teach the people; and to do what was appertaining to the cure of souls, according to the value of their benefices. They complained that these were given to foreigners, who did not reside in England; who would not, and could not, act as above described; who neither heard confessions, nor preached, nor taught; but who merely investigated, and exacted all the pecuniary emoluments, without any regard to their spiritual duties. They ended with mentioning the fact, which ought to have produced some disquiet, in every foreseeing ecclesiastic and statesman, that the whole state of the church was held in less reverence than before.⁴⁵ This

⁴⁴ Rolls Parl. v. 4. p. 290.⁴⁵ Ib. p. 305.

address was the more pointed, because the bishop of Winchester had made, in his opening speech to that year's parliament, an invective against heresy and Lollards.⁶⁶ The royal answer was, the civil negative “ Le Roy s'advisera.”⁶⁷

CHAP.
VI.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

But the commons were not discouraged. They represented again, that divers men of holy church had not been resident on their livings; and expressly added, that by this neglect, the people had fallen into Lollardies and heresies, for default of teaching.⁶⁸

The government was as unable as unwilling to remedy the evil; and chose therefore to meet this last application, by an assertion, that the existing laws were sufficient if executed,⁶⁹ and to join the church in repressing its opponents. Seven years afterwards, in 1432, this was distinctly shewn, by the speech to parliament being vehement against the incredulous and contemners, and rebels of the divine law, who deny faith, despise the sacraments, and seek to destroy the ministers of God and the church, as far as they are able.⁷⁰ After this mutual display of warring feeling, it is obvious, that the appeal to the sword was the only next resort; and that as the church was now directing the armed hand of the state against its opponents, they meditated and prepared for retaliating the violence against that government, which identified itself with their persecutors. A civil contest became inevitable, as soon as the dissatisfied party was strong enough to maintain it. The crown did not chuse to be neuter, and leave the church to the only weapons they ought to have used; reason, law, and wise reformation. The crown

⁶⁶ Rolls Parl. v. 4, p. 295.
⁶⁷ Ib.

⁶⁸ Ib. 305.
⁶⁹ Ib. 388.

⁷⁰ Ib. 306.

BOOK
III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.
Effect of
the men-
dicant
orders.

determined to fight the battle in its behalf, and fell with its steadiest supporters in the dreadful conflict.

The rise and progress of the mendicant orders, multiplied the embarrassments and the dangers of the possessioned church, while they endeavored to uphold the papal domination. The popes did not discern the incompatibility of sustaining the one, and of attacking the other. Irritated by the resistance of the clergy to their exactions; and by finding the possessioned body usually united with government against their tiara, especially in their ambitious projects; and perceiving also the spreading unpopularity of clerical indolence and luxury, the pontiffs cherished the Franciscans, Dominicans, and other mendicant orders of friars, as more active, useful, and obedient servants, and as those who would prove its more zealous, able, and popular troops. At first these friars, being angrily disconcerted by the established clergy, especially in England, were left to endure the miseries of famine, and the oppressions of wealthy power.⁷¹ But their appeal to the sympathies of the public, their recommendation by the Popes, and the moral contrast which they exhibited between their voluntary poverty and humility; and the pride and luxury of the monks and prevailing clergy, soon raised them to high veneration and importance.

But altho it was found necessary to have religious militia of this sort, to oppose the new opinions of the day, which the wealthy possessors of the monasteries, and church temporalities, by their

⁷¹ See the Fifth volume of this History. The four principal mendicant orders were, the Franciscans, the Dominicans, the Augustines, and the Carmelites.

relaxing habits occasioned, and were too indolent, too ignorant to combat: Yet no hostilities from the heretics, whose censures were so dreaded, could have been more dangerous, or more fatal to the papal church, than the unceasing, popular, and sanctioned warfare of these its new allies and missioned emissaries actually became. They began a steady and pertinacious attack on the wealth, luxury, attainments, and conduct of the established clergy. They contested with them for the exercise of all their functions, and especially of those so important for the influence and power, which all, who enjoyed them, exercised—confession, absolution, the administration of the sacraments, and the command of purgatory. They delighted to expose the ignorance and illiberality of the establishment, and to display their own superior attainments; and they succeeded in bringing the previous members of the church into popular disesteem; and in confirming the general dissatisfaction at their rich possessions, and worldly lives. The statutes of Mortmain, preventing these friars from receiving landed property, the religious, or penitentiary part of the public, poured their pecuniary favors on their new orders, in preference to the hierachal church, or in conjunction with it; and from this liberality, the Dominicans and Franciscans, in the fourteenth century, became rivals to the establishment in the very affluence and luxury, for which they had so unsparingly reviled it.

So great was the popularity of the mendicant orders, that during the fourteenth century, they established themselves in the highest favor at court. Thus, a Dominican became the confessor of Edward III. and another of Richard II. Such were their

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

influence and power, and so despotic was their use of it, that the Dominican confessor of Edward, arrested the confessor of the archbishop of Canterbury, at the prelate's table, and had him dragged to prison, with several others, whom he kept many years in confinement, and from whom, by using the king's name, he made many grievous extortions.⁷² In the same spirit, the friar who became confessor of Richard II. arrested, imprisoned, and tortured his criticising or resisting brethren, without hearing or permitting any defence, till he was disgraced and exiled: not even the great laity could escape his hostility. He interfered, in all things; and having the royal ear, he governed as he pleased.⁷³ Others of the Dominican order, are described as fascinating the princes and nobles, by their preaching and flattery, and thro their instrumentality oppressing, and beating down all whom they chose to attack.⁷⁴ In their influence over the female world, they are thus distinguished: The Franciscans were most favored by noble ladies and gentlewomen; the Dominicans by the nuns.⁷⁵

The hostilities of the friars against the established monks and clergy, excited from these an indignant animosity. They wrote many works against mendicity, which were expressly aimed at these intruders.⁷⁶ Their anger took the shape of prophecy,

⁷² Pet. Pateshul, British Museum MSS. Titus, D 10. This MS. contains the extracts which our biographer, Bale, made from this author's works.

⁷³ Pateshul, an Augustine friar, his contemporary, has transmitted these facts to us. MSS. ib.

⁷⁴ Patesh. MS. ib.

⁷⁵ Ib.

⁷⁶ Thus Jos. Ashwardby, in 1380, attacked the mendicity of friars. Tanner Bib. Mon. p. 53. So Jo. Aston, in 1382, ib. 55. The chancellor of St. Paul's discussed, in 1470; whether mendicants were in a state of perfection, Tan. 478; and in France, Will. de St. Amour, in his book on the dangers of the latter times, published a bitter invective against the

and finding that they could not prevent the aggrandizement of their rivals, they solaced themselves by predicting their speedy downfall. Thus the Abbot Joachim, ventured to announce, that the mendicant orders would soon be annihilated. A canon of Bridlington, who versified the English annals, when he reached the reign of Richard II., declared, that the fathers of the church would speedily abolish them ; and a Jacobin friar, even fixed the year 1408, as the time when the chain of Dominic, and the rope of Francis, would be broken."⁷ It is an Augustine friar, who, with similar feelings, warm from the battles of his day, repeats these attacks ; and thus apprizes us, that the prosperity of the two most successful orders, had even divided the mendicants friars against each other ; and that the friars were fighting among themselves, at the same time that they were assailing, and assailed by the church establishment.

But the opponents of the Franciscans and Dominicans, were not contented with uttering ominous predictions. They believed and circulated the most injurious anecdotes and fictions against them. Thus the Augustine describes a Franciscan as haunting a noble lady on her death-bed, to prevail on her to

mendicant orders. St. Lewis sent this to Pope Alexander IV. The celebrated Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure were sent into Italy, to defend their orders. Aquinas, in his nineteenth Opusculum, composed an apology for the mendicants. The Pope then condemned Amour's work, and he was banished from the university of Paris. Alban Butler's Life of St. Thomas, v. 3. p. 50.

⁷ Pat. MSS. Titus, D 10. This prediction was not so visionary, at the time it was uttered, as it may at first appear. The prevalence of the opinions of Wicliff, and the power of his supporters, were so great, that the church in this country would have been shaken, if Richard II. had not been deposed. It was the accession of Henry IV. that postponed the English reformation to Henry VIII. His change of the dynasty kept the established church from any alteration of its property for a century longer.

BOOK III. bequeath her property to his order.⁷⁸ The friars of a convent are named, who passed their nights in jovial revelry.⁷⁹ Three demons are declared to have been seen walking in the cloisters of the Dominicans, dressed in their habits;⁸⁰ and the most opprobrious vices are enumerated as the real character of their sanctimonious hypocrisy.⁸¹ That no disgraceful imputation may be omitted, they are charged with being coiners and sorcerers.⁸²

**REIGN OF
HENRY VI.**

That the obnoxious and calumniated orders, were superior to their opponents, in their intellectual attainments, is proved by the accusation itself: for as two instances of their studying necromancy, and alchemy, the illustrious Franciscan, Roger Bacon; and the no less celebrated Dominican, Albertus Magnus, are peculiarly selected.⁸³ But when we recollect, that St. Thomas Aquinas was a Dominican, and that all the great schoolmen arose from the mendicant orders, we shall immediately perceive, that the triumph of mind and knowledge, was indisputably their's. Few works, since the days of Aristotle, display such a profundity, acuteness, and activity of logical, ethical, and metaphysical thought, as those of Aquinas. They occupy nineteen folio volumes, and yet he died in his forty-eighth year.⁸⁴ The

⁷⁸ Pat. MSS. Titus, D 10.

⁷⁹ Ib.

⁸⁰ Ib. 194.

⁸¹ 'Contentiones, simulantationes, iræ, rixæ, homicidia, furtæ, blasphemæ, incestus, adulteria, masculorum concubitus, detractiones, proditiones.' Pat. ib.

⁸² Pat. ib.

⁸³ 'Alios diversarum superstitionum libros a quodam fratre Rogero Bacono, minore, et fratre Alberto, predicatoro, et *alias* necromanticis, alchemistis, incantatoribus, predictarum sectarum doctoribus, editos.' Pat. MSS. 194. Albertus Magnus wrote a treatise of affectionate piety, in Latin, on the union of the soul with the Deity, which was translated into Italian, and printed at Rome, in 1525.

⁸⁴ He died 7 March 1274. Alb. Butler's Life of St. Thomas, v. 3. 58. He was not a mere subtle reasoner. He seems to have cherished the most ardent and spiritual feelings of christianity, and to have been a

mental superiority of these new orders, naturally resulted from the fact, that becoming the most popular and energetic, the intelligent youth of the country, joined their schools and communities, in preference to the less-applauded establishment. Young spirits, who love fame and distinction, fly to the points where praise is most attainable, and by the celebrity they acquire, perpetuate the attractions, by which they were themselves attached to the societies they adorn.

CHAP.
VI.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

St. Francis had enjoined his order to wear a hair-cloth next the skin, a coarse woollen tunic with a rope for a girdle, and no shoes; but at the close of the fourteenth century, the Franciscans, in England, are described to have used garments of the finest and softest wool, most delicately dyed, with a silken knotted cord made by friendly nuns, and with sandals curiously cut, embroidered with variegated silk needlework. They had lofty mansions, precious jewels, and bags of money; if they were reminded of their vow of poverty, they answered, "All these are the Pope's property, not our's. We have none."⁵⁵

The English Dominicans had as much departed from their original institution. They who were to have had no money, or fine buildings, to eat no flesh, unless sick, to have no linen, gloves, or boots, and to be clothed in coarse woollen from the head to the feet, had now made their dress as elegant and as delicate as the Franciscans.⁵⁶ It cannot be doubted,

man of unambitious simplicity, and sincerity of character. It is to the credit of the great churchmen of his day, that, if they could not imitate, they could at least duly appreciate him.

⁵⁵ Pet. Pat. MSS. 194.⁵⁶ The two great bodies of mendicant friars, the Carmelites and Augustines, were treading in the same steps. Ib. But our public records shew, that the superiors of the Cistercian monks made repeated efforts to visit and reform their brethren. See Rym. Fed. 10. p. 501, and N. 93.

BOOK III. that in the reign of Henry VI. the great body of the clergy, both within and without the old establishment, were exchanging with universal emulation, the spirit and manners of religion for those of worldly affluence, ambition, and voluptuousness.⁷⁷ The noble exceptions that occasionally arose, but proved more clearly the prevailing degeneracy.

REIGN OF HENRY VI.

That the Franciscans were most vivacious in exerting their intellectual pugnacity against the ancient churchmen ; and were fond of displaying the great superiority of mind and knowledge which they had attained, will be noticed hereafter.⁷⁸ Not even their acquisition of wealth, dignity, and fame, could stop their propensity. They had excited their own inquisitiveness to an activity, which delighted to attack their established antagonists ; who retorted with bitterness on them the charge of heresy, and actually prosecuted them for it. Thus in 1425, two Franciscans were cited for opinions savoring of error and heresy. They escaped by denying the truth of the allegations.⁷⁹ But a more formidable assailant arose in William Russell, a Franciscan, and guardian of the convent of his order in London. He taught in the same year the alarming doctrines, that personal tithes were not a divine precept, or at least should not be paid to the parochial clergy ; that they were not due where there was no custom in their favor, and that unless there was a legal usage to the contrary, every one might dispense them in pious uses among the

⁷⁷ The prosecution in 1424, against the Dominican John Russell, for preaching, that a religious man would not mortally sin if he committed the immoral act which he mentions, is an instance of the innovations that were attempted. Wilk. Conc. v. 3. p. 430.

⁷⁸ See Fifth volume of this Work.

⁷⁹ Wilk. Conc. 3. p. 433.

poor.⁹⁰ A long process was instituted against him for this attack on the pecuniary rights of the church; which ended in his making a solemn abjuration.⁹¹ In the next year, another Franciscan at York, was prosecuted for teaching that a priest who lapsed into mortal sin was no priest as to heaven; and therefore, that a secular judge who should arrest one mortally sinning, did not lay violent hands on a priest: That the sacerdotal office rested merely in the consecration of the eucharist: That if the church would not punish the unchastity of its professors, laymen must; and that if a priest apprehended by the secular authority would not enter a prison, he might be driven into it by stripes.⁹² These instances shew the continued hostilities of the order of St. Francis

CHAP.
VI

REIGN OF
HENRY VI

⁹⁰ Wilk. Conc. 3. p. 434.

* Ib. 448. These mendicant orders were, however, real benefactors to literature, amid their bigotry and eccentricities. Our ancient drama is greatly indebted to them for its first, the rude state. In the Cotton Library, Vesp. D 8, is an important MS. which exhibits their attempts to dramatize the history of the New Testament. The MS. title of the work is, ‘Contenta Novi Testamenti, scenice expressa, et actitata olim, per Monachos, sive Fratres Mendicantes. Vulgo dicitur hic liber, ‘Ludus Coventriæ, sive Ludus Corp. xi.’’ It is written in English metre. Sir W. Dugdale thought it contained the dramas performed at Coventry during the feast of Corpus Christi. Ant. War. p. 116. It begins,—

' Now, gracyous God ! grounded of all goodnessse !
As your grete glorie nevyr begynnyng had ;
So them socour and save, all them that sytt and sese,
And lystenyth to our talkyng with silens still and sad ;
For, we purpose in pertly stytle in these plesse,
The pepyl to please with pleys ful glad.
Now lysteneth us, lonely, beth mar and lesse,
Gentillys and Yemanyis ! of goodly lyff lad,
This tyde.

We wal you shewe, as yt we kan,
How that this world fyrist began;
And how God made bothe molde and man,
Yff that ye wyll abyde.

In the first pagent, we thinke to play
How God dede make yowe his own myth
Hevyn so cler upon the fyrist day,' &c.

BOOK against the established church. The Dominicans
III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

But the warfare most dangerous to the establishment in the reign of Henry VI. was that waged by the Carmelites against it. They had distinguished themselves already in the same reign and under Henry V. for repelling the doctrines of the Wickliffites.²² But they felt that the property and luxury of the great English clergy were inconsistent with their Christianity. As the discussions they caused have not been noticed in our national history, and shew very strongly both the state and feeling of the public mind on this subject, at this critical period, and the concussions which the church was receiving from its own members; it will illustrate this important subject, if we detail them from the authentic account, which the archbishop of Canterbury then sent to the Pope.²³

In the middle of October 1464, a young Carmelite, Henry Parker, publicly taught at St. Paul's, that Christ lived like one of the poor, in a state of mendicity; that the mendicant was, therefore, the most perfect state of the militant church; and that the spiritual part of the church ought to have no property, but to live on pure alms.

²² Thus Netter of Walden, one of their order, acquired great celebrity, in 1414, by his *Doctrinale Antiquum* against the opinions of Wicliffe. Wharton's App. to Cave. Hist. Lit. p. 75. In this work, he collected into one body all the questions and opinions of Wicliffe, and other reformers, and vigorously attacked them. Gasler Dysse wrote against heresy and Lollardy. Richard Maydesley composed an applauded oration against them; and R. Lanyrfans read an attack on them at Oxford. Bale's MSS. Titus, A 10. These were all Carmelites.

²³ We are indebted for this to Bale's transcript in the Cotton library, Titus, D. 10, p. 185-7. It is signed also by seven doctors of divinity, one of whom is Thomas Eburhall. It is in answer to the Pope's letter, dated June 1465, desiring to know what had been preached against the faith, and to have a specimen of the sermons, that the heretical gravity may be punished with worthy severity. Ib.

To repel the effect of these opinions, a doctor appeared in the same pulpit on behalf of the establishment on the following Sunday, and with moderation and good temper preached a sermon, contradicting Parker's positions. But some little time afterwards, another Carmelite, Thomas Holden, a doctor of divinity, and head of his convent, declared in the same place, on the second Sunday in Advent, that he could not permit the doctrines of his brother and scholar, which had been reprobated, to remain undefended; and therefore he went at great length into the writings of the apostles and fathers, to prove that the Saviour had lived on public benevolence. He rested himself on this article, because the other doctrines followed immediately from it; and he declared that it should be discussed again in his schools on the following Friday. On this day, other persons resumed the subject, and maintained that it was a true and catholic tenet. On the following Sunday, they pursued their blow, and decided in the same schools, that Christ, while in his human nature, had chosen to be neither king, nor lord, but to live poor like a beggar, till he arose from the dead.

The effect of these exertions was so great, the archbishop adds, that the faith of many began to vacillate; and to doubt about the propriety of a possessed church, to its great danger.^{**}

Roused both by the obvious intention of such sermons and by the visible peril, a learned doctor was selected to discuss at length on the ensuing sabbath, in what catholic sense our Saviour's mendicity was to be understood; and to shew, that neither he nor his apostles had begged alms, as the

CHAP.
VI.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

^{**} MS. Titus, D 10.

BOOK III.
REIGN OF HENRY VI.

mendicant orders were accustomed to do. His eloquence appeased the people; but on the fourth Advent Sunday, the Carmelites were reinforced by a Dominican friar, who preached in confirmation of all the dreaded doctrines, and informed the people, that after dinner, if they chose to attend at the Carmelite chapel, they would hear a more full discourse on the same topics from a venerable doctor. Papers were then affixed on the doors of the church, to give further notice of this intended harangue. Thus the question, as to the property of the clergy, was made a regular battle between them and the mendicant orders.

In the afternoon, the people flocked with eagerness to the convent of the Carmelites: and there, the provincial of the order himself, John Mylverton, was seen to ascend the pulpit. He said, he had heard that one of his brethren had been defamed by the charge of error and blasphemy. He declared that he had diligently examined the question, and was satisfied that his brother was entirely guiltless, as he had uttered neither a blasphemous nor a vain opinion; and to convince them that he had preached nothing wrong, he would himself confirm all that had been said, from the authority of Scripture, and from the writings of the fathers.

He quoted largely for this purpose, and strove to persuade his audience that Christ was so far mendicant, as to have no right or title to any thing, but what he received from human bounty. His arguments, the prelate intimates to have been slender and scandalous, but to have been uttered with such gravity of countenance, such an ardent spirit, and such elaborate circumstances, that he disturbed very much the

minds of his auditors, and the unlearned vulgar; always ready, he adds, to take the worst part.

CHAP.
VI.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

A great tumult arose among the people; and alarming imaginations began to be indulged. “We know,” says the archbishop, “that some thought, and we heard some even dare to say, If he were so poor, why should his followers, the pope, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, abbots, and other prelates, have so many possessions, and such great property? Priests ought not to take tithes nor oblations, but as we please to give them, and ought to live on pure alms only.” “Some,” he subjoins, “were carried to that pitch of infamy, as not to fear to say, that the possessed church had apostatized from the very time it became endowed; and that it was a duty that would be grateful to God, to take from the prelates their riches and ample possessions, which they had held in contradiction to the example of their Lord and his apostles.” The venom so spread, that they could scarcely be kept *from a public insurrection.*²⁶

The prelate expresses his opinion, that the sword of the prince was more wanted than the authority of the church; that these errors had become so deeply rooted in the minds of the hearers, that they could not be plucked out; that he had caused the two Carmelites to be excommunicated, and he solicited the papal assistance.²⁷ This was granted and used; ecclesiastical censures were issued, with all their severities; some of the attacked, despised them; but others were terrified, and abjured. Mylverton went to Rome, to complain to the Pope, of the injuries brought on his order; but the archbishop pursued him with a letter to the pontiff, which had the effect

²⁶ MS. Titus, D 10.

²⁷ Ib.

BOOK
III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

of causing him to be imprisoned in the castle of St. Angelo.⁹⁸ The Pope, in the inquiry, which occasioned the narrative, stated, that such heretical pravity must be amputated in its beginning; and therefore urged the metropolitan to admonish the people to fly from the deadly poison.⁹⁹ Mylverton was kept above two years in his dungeon; he long resisted the tyranny that wounded him: but his spirit was subdued at last, and then he was sent back, with the Pope's epistle, stating, that he had returned to his saner senses; and calling him a beloved son.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ MS. Chron. Scrip. Anon. also extracted by Bale in Titus, D 10. p. 182.

⁹⁹ Paul the Second's letter is dated in June 1465. MS. Tit. D 10. p. 184.

¹⁰⁰ The Pontiff's letter intitles himself, as usual, the *Servus Servorum*, and is dated 22 Dec. 1468. ‘Dilectum filium—per biennium et ultra carcere detineri fecemus—Is, et si diu negans—tamen ad saniorem sensum veri intellectus rediens, &c.’ MS. Tit. D 10. p. 187.

C H A P. VII.

Attacks on the Church from its Parochial Clergy.—Vices of the Prelates.—Spread of reforming Opinions.—The Defenders of the Establishment; its Persecutions and Severities.

THE establishment was attacked still more vitally, by several of its own parochial clergy, during the reign of Henry VI. on their doctrines and rites as well as conduct. William Taileur, a priest, preached earnestly against praying to saints. He taught, that prayer to a creature was idolatry ; that civil power was inconsistent with sacred perfection ; that our Saviour had intimated that priests should not have worldly dominion ; that friars begging was a condemnable and abominable thing ; that offerings to the cross were idolatry ; that opinions condemned at councils, may yet be true ; and that kings, princes, and good men only, are permitted by the Deity, to govern, for civil purposes, their temporal kingdoms.¹ He was examined in the first year of Henry VI., and confessed, that for fourteen years, he had been of those sentiments.²

CHAP.
VII.

Three years after him, in 1425, we learn from the confessions of the rector of Braybroke,³ that he had encouraged his parishioners, not to adore the cross, nor to think confessions necessary. He had taught, that if priests could convert the wafer into the Deity,

¹ Wilk. Conc. v. 3. p. 407-13.

² Ib. 405.

³ R. Stoke. J. Wilk. Conc. 434-7.

BOOK
III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

they could make any thing a God. That all monks, nuns, friars and canons, were members of the Devil, not of the Supreme ; and that the lords temporal ought to have all things in common. He had written books, kept schools, and formed conventicles to diffuse these opinions. The rector of Snav^e had also his schools and conventicles, to spread his deviating sentiments.

Another priest, in 1428, had for twenty years disseminated the opinions of Wicliffe, at Oxford and London ; had spoken against monks and friars ; and had insisted, that the Pope's indulgences were no benefit; that it was not lawful to attack the Bohemian reformers ; that all goods should be in common, and that no person ought to have any separate property.⁵ At the same time we find a chaplain⁶ asserting, that the sacrament was not turned into our Saviour's body ; that pilgrims would be better at home ; that the legends and lives of saints were naught ; and their miracles untrue ; that no writings were holy but the Bible ; and that the Pope was anti-christ.

The vicar of Maunden, in Essex, in 1429, had been inculcating, that the consecrated host was true bread in nature, and was our Saviour's body but by figure ; that priests could not make it the Deity ; that every one is a pilgrim hastening to heaven, and will reach it if he observe the divine commandments, and does works of mercy ; that to place hope in images, to make vows to them, or to pray for the dead, was of no use ; that all our trust should be put only in God ; and that Wicliffe, was higher in heaven

⁴ Th. Drayton. J. Wilk. Conc. 435.

⁵ R. Meingyn. Ib. 500, 1.

⁶ Th. Gareuter. Ib. 502.

than Thomas à Becket.' In 1459, Reginald Peacock, whom the duke of Gloucester had promoted, and afterwards Suffolk, declared it not to be necessary to believe in the catholic church, nor in the eucharist, nor in councils; and that the church might err in matters of faith.⁷ These instances shew, that the papal system and establishment in England, were being undermined by their own members; and that the most agitating opinions, as to property, were also maintained. The schools and conventicles, which they formed, indicate that the materials of civil warfare, were, in many parts, providing; most probably unperceived by themselves, yet, with that certain result, when other causes should coincide, by these conscientious reformers.

Theoretical opinions never of themselves can disturb a country: they are meteors of mind, that dart up, glare, and vanish. No hierarchy has ever been overturned by the absurdity of any of its notions; while the conduct of its members has corresponded with the sanctity of their profession. It is vice that destroys popular reverence, and rouses popular hostility. All can judge of the inconsistency of profanity and religion; and no one can avoid being affected by this contradiction in their sacred teachers, tho he may be unable or averse to investigate their doctrines. Hence, when we read of the character of the archbishop of York, who died the year that Henry VI. acceded, as drawn even by a zealous opposer of all heretics, that he acted in age as he had done in youth, and that he pursued, without restraint, his sensual and immoral propensities to the

⁷ Th. Gareuter. J. Wilk. Conc. 515.

⁸ Wilk. Conc. 576.

BOOK III. end of his life, according to his own arbitrary pleasure ;⁹ can we wonder that such prelates should create, in the public mind, an enmity against the church they governed ; and a determined spirit of violent resistance, when that church so fiercely persecuted all that should dare to think it wrong ? and yet so blind was the establishment to this inevitable effect on the public feeling, that in 1449, after indications of the coming storm had appeared, they ventured to have it stated for them in Parliament, that in divers parts of the kingdom, many priests, as well secular as religious, had been grievously vexed and troubled wrongfully, by divers indictments of felony, and therefore prayed—what ? That any unjust prosecution might be rectified ? No ; but, that every priest might be pardoned for all manner of felonies of rape, done before the 1st of June then *next coming*, and from all forfeitures for taking excessive salaries, provided a noble, or six shillings and eight pence, for every priest in the kingdom, were paid to the king.¹⁰ It seems surprising that men of the great intellect who then governed the church should have permitted such a confession of criminality to be brought before parliament. It can be only explained on the ground, that they were determined not to amend their conduct ; that they meant to put and keep the question upon the issue of power ; that they felt they had this in their own hands, and that they had resolved to use it unshamed and unshrinking. To us who know the result, this seems

⁹ Walsing. MS. Sloane, 1776.

¹⁰ This curious petition is in the Rolls Parl. v. 5. p. 153. The king assented, ‘in cas the nobles of the saide preestes be graunted to hym in the saide convocations.’ Ib. The statute was made, and is printed in the Statutes of the Realm, v. 1. p. 352, the subsidy having been granted.

infatuation both in themselves and in the government, ~~which perished in their defence; but perhaps the evil had became so inveterate, as to be incurable by any~~ thing short of an entire revolution of religious p~~er~~
erty, as well as of tenets; and the last extremity of battle was naturally resolved upon by those who, being in the enjoyment, would not abandon it but with life.¹¹ The order of the archbishop of Canterbury, in 1455, expresses very emphatically the immoralities that were then disgracing the English church establishment.¹² But, excepting the issuing of monitions and prohibitions, which became matters of course, like official proclamations against vice, neither read nor heeded, not one effective measure was taken to suppress the evil, that was preparing such general mischief.¹³

The minds of the clergy were at this time full set towards state employment. As if religion had become really a dream, worldly business as well as worldly pleasures, became the object of all the leading ecclesiastics. To this end their studies were directed, and by such occupations their characters

State em-
ployments
of the
clergy.

¹¹ Fabian mentions, that when Henry V. called 'a synod of bishops and abbots, for amending of their ill living, they, fearing their temporalities, encouraged him to war in France, to exercise him that way.' p. 490.

¹² It recites, that some rectors and vicars went as vagrants and dissolute persons, thru the kingdom, in pursuit of worldly lucre, neglecting their cures, and by feastings and drunkenness, fornications, and other vices, wasted their revenues, and left their chancels and parsonage houses unrepaired; and were not only unskilled in letters, but almost ignorant of them; had illegitimate children, &c. 3 Wilk. Conc. 673, 4. In 1466, great complaints were made of the clergy by the provincial council at York, and it commanded them to avoid taverns, public spectacles, bad women, and injurious and forbidden sports and plays.

¹³ This seems to have been the truth; because, at all the councils of this period, and before, many efforts were made, by the sincere and worthy part of the church, to reform its palpable immorality: but they never succeeded. Either the requisite regulations were never made, or never enforced, nor intended to be so.

BOOK III. were formed. Clergymen were secretaries of government, the privy seals, cabinet counsellors, treasurers of the crown, ~~ambassadors~~, commissioners to open parliament, and to Scotland; presidents of the king's council, supervisors of the royal works, chancellors, keepers of the records, the masters of the rolls, and even the physicians both to the king and to the duke of Gloucester, during the reign of Henry VI. and afterwards.¹⁴ They may have been, in abilities and attainments, the fittest for these offices: many certainly were; but they could not acquire such qualifications without the sacrifice of their most sacred duties; nor enjoy the offices without a diminution of their sacred character; nor exclude from them, laymen as ambitious as themselves, without incurring the vindictive hatred of those whose advancement they precluded: neither could they give this direction to the clerical mind without destroying the public attachment to the religion they deserted.¹⁵

¹⁴ The Rolls of Parliament, Calend. Rotul. Rymer's Fœdera, Tanner's Bibliotheca Monastica, Leland's Lives, and Wood's Atheneæ Oxoniæ, give many instances of all these facts.

¹⁵ The busy and promoted clergy of that day, when questioned on their secular pursuits and enjoyments, would probably have answered in sentiments somewhat similar to those expressed by the present archbishop of Cashel, in his recent and well-written charge: ‘Because we are invested with a peculiar office, and bound to the discharge of peculiar duties, many expect from us a total abstinence from all interference in secular concerns; forgetful that we are individual members of society, as well as public ministers, and that we have the same right to form our opinions, and to regulate our conduct, in that capacity, as other men, provided we take care neither to forget our station, nor to degrade our character. Having the wide field of public action before our eyes, to attract our attention, and the constant recurrence of local opinions and events, to exercise our mental energies, is it possible for us not to think and act independently, like other men? Social feelings, social interests, and social sentiments, will unavoidably, and may innocently, exert their influence over our minds.’—On this delicate, but most important subject, a friendly layman can only answer, that the least possible degree of worldly business, state, and pleasures, seems to be the wisest, the safest, and the most suitable to a conscientious clergyman. But on this subject I would rather state the apology than criticise it.

The laity becoming more and more disaffected to the establishment, were active instruments in diffusing what scholars preached and wrote. Books were written in English, and circulated secretly, which contained the new doctrines that proved so fatal to the church. One of the most obnoxious of these, in 1415, was "The Lantern of Light." It maintained, that the Pope was antichrist, and had attached to the law of the Redeemer, papal decrees which were of no authority, force, or value; that the archbishops and bishops were the seats of the great beast of the Revelation, who sat and reigned upon them; that their pretending to give licences to preach, was one of his true characters, and that every priest and believer might preach without them; that the Roman court was his chief head; the prelates, his body, and the new sorts of friars, monks and canons, his tail; that ecclesiastical things should not be sumptuously adorned with gold, silver, or precious stones; nor should the ministers of Christ be otherwise than his humble imitators, adoring him in simple and middling mansions, and not in the sumptuous edifices of those days; that priests should not be occupied in churches in singing so much, but should study the Scriptures, and preach them; that indulgencies were unwarranted; that there should be no pilgrimage to images; that ecclesiastical ordinances benefited indifferently all who were virtuous; that Judas took the sacrament, inferring, therefore, that it was but bread and wine; that the people should not obey bishops, unless they watched over their souls in holy conversation; and that Christians were persecuted chiefly from two causes—the clergy retaining so much temporal property, and the

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.
English
books
against the
papal sys-
tem.

BOOK III. begging of the friars.¹⁶ This book was found in the house of a feltmonger, written in a good hand in English, on parchment, and neatly bound in red leather. He could not read, but he had it read to him; and tho he had been two years confined in Conway castle, and three years in the Fleet, for his opinions, he declared unhesitatingly, to his inquisitorial examiners, that he thought it contained many things very good and useful to himself and his soul.¹⁷ His servants were taken up; one confessed, that he had seen the author bring it to his master, and converse on it; and othres, that it was read often on festivals before his family, and by him in his house, in St. Martin's-lane, near Aldersgate.¹⁸ A volume containing Wicliffe's tracts, belonging to sir John Oldcastle, was seized in 1413, in Paternoster-row, where it had been sent to be illuminated, which was taken, and read to Henry V., in his palace at Kennington, who, after he had heard two leaves read, protested his abhorrence of it.¹⁹ Another book was taken, that came from Coventry;²⁰ and works of this kind became so formidable, that a general question was put to a person apprehended, "whether he ever had, since his abjuration, in his house or custody, *any books written in English?*"²¹

As there was then no printing press in England, tho in that century, and in the reiga of Henry VI., this was introduced, it may be asked, how could these works be so dangerous? the answer may be

¹⁶ It was examined, and found to contain these doctrines. J. Wilk. 374. Its author was stated to be John Greene. Ib. 372.

¹⁷ Ib. 372. This was J. Claydon. The ten commandments were also with it; and he said he had much affection for it, because of a sermon preached at Horfaldowne, which was in it. Ib. ¹⁸ Ib. 373, 4.

¹⁸ Ib. 352. ¹⁹ Ib. ²⁰ Ib. 372.

given, that when new feelings are excited, and new opinions begin to sprout, every man whom they affect, becomes an intellectual press, teaching and influencing those about him. The countenance, gestures, mode of life, silent manners, habitual phrase, and daily conversation, become so many vehicles, which can be neither suppressed nor detected, for the diffusion of the new ideas, sympathies, and antipathies, which far outrun, both in celerity and impression, all the effect of the printer's labor. Every man, who has imbibed the new doctrines, becomes, often unconsciously to himself, a living book ; and his daily manners, as well as his tongue, a silent printing press. Contempt, aversion, satire, derision, invective, and hostility, were not only displayed, and communicated intentionally, by the eye, the face, the limbs, and the demeanor, as well as by the voice and words ; but even by the quiet, retired, and domestic conduct. We perceive this, by what the clergy declared to be suspicious indications of heresy ; as, to remain sitting when the cross was presented, or when others were adoring it ; not to kneel to images ; not to kiss them ; not to shew marks of veneration, as processions were passing ; to visit, or to receive visits, or to have received them, from persons, who were, or had been suspected of errors ; to dwell where these lived ; to have English books ; to hear them read ; to sell them ; to borrow them, or to be acquainted with those who had them.²² The archbishop of Canterbury actually made it one of the good grounds of denunciation for heresy, if a man differed in life and manners, from the common con-

²² Instances of these, or allusions to them, may be seen in Wilk. Concil. v. 3. pp. 374. 396. 372. 3. 434. 498, 9, &c.

BOOK
III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

versation of the faithful.²³ These circumstances shew what it was, that multiplied every where the alienation of the popular mind, before printing presses were used, and will always so act, tho these were annihilated, if other causes rouse inimical sympathies. It is the feeling which gives meaning, interest, and circulation, to what types and mechanical contrivances exhibit; and which would be dumb and useless without it. It is this, which anticipates, what they only follow to gratify and confirm. New feelings in society create new mind and impulse; and form and spread around them, new epidemias of opinion; like heat and damp, always radiating and diffusing, and powerfully felt in their effects, tho their agencies can be neither seen, pursued nor prevented. The heretic may be silent and unoffending, yet his most peaceable demeanor excites the question, why does not that man do what others are taught to do? and to cause such a question, is a shaking of the old system in the mind of the inquirer, and the suggestion of something else. No law, no persecution, and no power, can preclude this effect; unless they can extirpate the dissentient; but the efforts to destroy these, have always multiplied their immediate number; and if they could, at the time, fully succeed in their extinction, the history of that success is certain to re-produce either the same evil, or a greater; even the weaker sex catch and communicate, and perpetuate the contagion.²⁴ In such a day of conflict, truth and right

²³ Wilk. Concil. v. 3. p. 378.

²⁴ Thus Miss Catherine Dertford was in 1428 suspected of heresy, about pilgrimages, the adoration of images, and the sacrament of the altar. 3 Wilk. 493.

only can survive; and all that appertains to them, will be found to be unperishable.

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF:
HENRY VI.
—
Ill effects
of pilgrim-
ages.

An applauded act of the religion of that day, was the performance of pilgrimages, to the places where some part of a saint's body was deposited. It strikes our present feeling, like a disagreeable discord, to read of a dead corpse, which our sympathies now leave undisturbed in its solemn repose, and cannot endure to have molested, that it should be pulled to pieces out of real veneration, or for interested purposes. But yet one of the hands of Thomas Aquinas was cut off, and given to his sister for her domestic chapel, and afterwards to the Dominicans at Salerno. One of his arms was sent to their great convent at Paris; a bone of his other arm was given to Naples; and the rest of his body, for which Naples, Rome, the university of Paris, and many other universities, princes, and orders, had contended,²⁵ was granted by the Pope to be carried to Thoulouse; where the king's brother, the clergy and nobility, and 150,000 people went out to meet it. Many places in England were venerated for such remains, or for analogous legends, and were the objects of pilgrimages in this century.²⁶ We have here alluded to this custom, because a passion, at this time, seized the English public for wandering from their own pilgrim localities

²⁵ Alban Butler's Lives, v. 3. p. 59.

²⁶ Besides the well-known shrine at Canterbury, which our Chaucer has immortalized, we had, and still have, Winifred's well; but the Virgin at Walsingham was most frequented in the reign of Henry VI. and Edward IV. The duke of Norfolk is mentioned as going in pilgrimage, on foot, from his castle at Framlingham to Walsingham. 1 Fenn, 167. Edward himself went there in October 1475. Fenn, 5. p. 119. A Norfolk gentleman writes, 'I have vowed to go in pilgrimage to Walsingham, and to St. Leonard's (in Norwich) for you. My mother vowed another image of wax of your weight, to our lady at Walsingham,' 1 Fenn, p. 25.

BOOK III. to that of St. James in Spain, and the clergy of England were so unwise, as to encourage the fashion ; without perceiving, that such a journey, and all its company, intercourse, conversations, and consequences, were inimical to their domestic influence and authority ; and could not but contribute to increase their depreciation. St. Gregory of Nyssa felt those to Jerusalem in his days to be dangerous to religious impressions.²⁷ They were certain to be far more so in the reign of Henry VI. when the most hostile opinions and criticisms were in full agitation ; few came back more pious ; but many, more satirical and refractory.²⁸

Resistance of the establishment. The zeal and resistance of the establishment were not disproportionate to the attack. Literary defenders started up from their body, protecting even their least defensible of tenets and practices.

²⁷ Tho he says of his own visit to Jerusalem, ‘ When I saw these holy places, I was filled with a joy and pleasure which no tongue can express.’ T. 3. p. 665. Yet, remarking the ill effects on others, he wrote, after his return, a short treatise, in which he condemns the pilgrimages that are made occasions of sloth, dissipation of mind, and other dangers. Alban Butler’s Lives, v. 3. p. 101.

²⁸ The number of these pilgrimages of English persons to the Spanish saint, St. Jago in Gallicia, at this time, is scarcely credible. The following are only those mentioned in two years in the king’s licences for their going, which appear in Rymer’s Fœdera, v. 10.

1434.	Jan.	-	90	1445.	Jan.	-	200
	Feb.	-	850		Feb.	-	130
	Mar.	-	80		Mar.	-	860
	April	-	900		April	-	618
	May	-	750		May	-	192
	June	-	160		June	-	850
	July	-	50		July	-	50

Even one of the ministers, the lord privy seal, in 1449, obtained a licence to undertake the pilgrimage and vows, for the salvation of his soul, and to carry 500 marcs with him. 11 Rym. 255. And cardinal Beaufort, in 4 Hen. VI. petitioned for leave to go on a pilgrimage, to which he was bound by a vow. Harl. MSS. 7048. In April 1428, 560 went.

Answerers to Wicliffe succeeded each other²⁰ with great animosity, if not with eloquence; and sturdy in the battle, if not triumphant with the victory. The university of Oxford appointed twelve magisters to examine his numerous works, and in 1412, no fewer than two hundred and sixty-seven erroneous and heretical conclusions were pointed out, all "guilty of fire." They stated to the archbishop of Canterbury, that in his diocese, Wicliffe had generated so many heirs of his sect, that without the sharpest censures and the most biting hooks they would not be rooted out.²¹ A Cistercian defended the monasteries against him,²² and in 1400 Alyngton vigorously championed the adoration of images.²³ But the most complete and masterly vindication of the establishment, was that of the active Carmelite, Thomas Netter, of Walden. He was educated at Oxford, and was sent by Henry IV. to the council of Pisa; where he attacked the two pontiffs whom his sovereign deemed antipopes. Becoming provincial prior of his order, he accused, in a sermon, Henry V. of sloth, in not punishing the Lollards. He was sent by him to the council of Constance to declaim against the Hussites. In 1419, he was dispatched to the king

CHAP.
VII.
REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

²⁰ In 1382, Th. Ashburn wrote against Wicliffe's celebrated Triologus. Tanner Bib. 52. Bankinus, an eloquent Dominican, was also an earnest opposer. Ib. 72. Gualter Dysse, a Carmelite, Rich. Lanyngham, and Rich. Maydesley, defended also some part of the assailed church. Bale, MSS. And in 1397, W. Wodeford composed many works against Wicliffe, some of which still remain in the Cotton library.

²¹ Wilkins has printed these in his Concil. v. 3. p. 339-349. They had extracted as many more, which they state that they had omitted; and they had found several others, 'which sound and taste as badly as these: but they may be maintained in the barren war of words; we have been sparing, as to them, of the sentence of extreme condemnation.' Ib. p. 339.

²² Adam Cisterciensis. Tanner, p. 7.
²³ Leland exults in this work. He calls it a triumph over the enemy. It still exists in MS. at Oxford.

BOOK III. of Poland; and on his way converted to Christianity the uncivilized duke of Lithuania. In 1422, after receiving the dying breath of the conqueror of Agincourt, he was appointed confessor to Henry VI: whom he accompanied to Paris in 1430, for his coronation in France.²³ His chief work, against the doctrines of Wicliffe, Huss, and their successors, was received with great applause, and has been several times printed on the continent.²⁴

The bigotry or zeal of Netter in the pulpit and with his pen, was equalled or outdone by archbishops Arundel and Chicheley, in the more terrible exertions of their mitred influence and power.

The first prelate began the attack of the church in the last year of Henry IV. It was he who caused Wicliffe's works to be examined at Oxford;²⁵ and in 1412, his bones to be dug up, thrown upon a dunghill and burnt.²⁶ In the next year, after the accession of Henry V. he had the tract of Wicliffe consumed by fire in St. Paul's church-yard;²⁷ and roused the king against sir John Oldcastle;²⁸ and assisted in the convocation where the brave knight was so strictly interrogated.²⁹ Altho the university of Oxford, with an integrity of principle that adds honor to all its numerous claims to celebrity and applause for its distinguished science, talents, and learning, never more comparatively superior to all around it than in the times we treat of, presented several judicious articles for the moral reformation of

²³ Where he died at Rouen. He is sometimes called Thomas Waldensis. Wharton's Add. to Cave's Hist. Eccl. p. 75.

²⁴ It is his 'Doctrinale Antiquum,' in three volumes folio. It has been printed at Paris, in 1532; at Salamanca in 1556; and 1571 at Venice. Wharton's Add. Cave's Hist. Lit. p. 75.

²⁵ So he says, 3 Wilk. 350.

²⁶ 3 Wilk. 351. ²⁷ Ib. ²⁸ Ib. 352, 3.

²⁹ Ib. 355.

the church in 1414;⁴⁰ yet the establishment, waving all amendment, proceeded to obtain that sanguinary statute against heretics, which disgraces the second year of the reign of Henry V: By this, the chancellor, treasurer, judges, justices of peace, sheriffs, mayors, bailiffs, and all who had any share in the administration of the laws, were required, on entering into their offices, to swear to exert their whole labor and diligence to search and destroy all manner of heresies, errors, and Lollardies, with all their power, and to assist the ordinaries and their commissaries, on this subject, whenever required. All persons convicted of heresies, of whatever condition, were to be delivered to the secular arm, and to forfeit all their lands and tenements. The judges and justices were empowered to inquire about all Lollards and heresies; and who were their maintainers, receivers, or encouragers; who were the common writers of such books; and into their sermons, schools, conventicles, congregations, and confederacies.⁴¹

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

In the same spirit, Chicheley, who succeeded Arundel soon after this statute was passed in 1416,

⁴⁰ See them in Wilk. Conc. v. 3. p. 360-365.

⁴¹ Rolls Parl. v. 4. p. 24, 25. In Arundel's time, the establishment was so afraid of the undignified clergy, as to forbid any, even parish priests, to preach, and especially a jure scripto, from the written law, or scriptures, unless authorized. The order was, 'Let no secular or regular clergyman assume the office of preaching the word of God to the people or clergy, unless he submit to a previous examination by the diocesan: and when found fit, let him be sent to some one certain parish. If any violate this statute, he shall incur the greater excommunication; and if he persist, he shall be reputed schismatic, and incur all the effect of the law, and all the pains of heresy and schism: so shall their aiders, receivers, or defenders. No preacher shall call in doubt what the church has decreed, nor its doctrines, decretals, or provincial constitutions, nor dispute on them, nor teach against the adoration of the cross; veneration of images, or pilgrimages to places or relics; but shall recommend these, and the usual processions, kneeling, bowings, incensings, kisses, oblations, and lights.' Excommunication was the first punishment, and confiscation of property the next. Lyndewode's Constit.

BOOK III. ordered all the bishops and archdeacons by themselves, their officials or commissaries, to inquire diligently at least twice a year, what persons were suspected of heresy ; and in every parish where heretics were reported to dwell, to make three respectable men swear, whether they knew of any heretics holding secret conventicles, or differing in life and manners from others, or supporting errors, or having suspicious English books, or receiving suspected persons, or dwelling in such places : and to denounce, prosecute, and imprison them.⁴² Few Roman emperors, most decried for their persecutions, outdid these severities. If the papal church was not able to stand against the reason and moral principle of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, it was not for want of the most tyrannous exertions of the most arbitrary power, and the most vindictive hostility.

These laws were executed with the same stern spirit that devised them. The persons apprehended in 1414, at St. Giles, with Oldcastle, were hung and burnt, with the exultation of the persecuting party,⁴³ and with public processions and litanies, by Henry the Fifth's approbation and command and mental rejoicing.⁴⁴ The hierarchy pursued sir John Oldcastle for three years, till they burnt him in 1417 :⁴⁵ and in most of the following years, some heretics were burnt

⁴² Wilk, Conc. 378.

⁴³ T. Elmham seems quite delighted to record, both in his metrical Latin and his prose, their unsparing execution. p. 94. He gives the most singular explanation of the number 666 in the Revelation, that I have seen. He says, it points out sir John Oldcastle. Ib.

⁴⁴ ‘Quod fiunt processiones, cum litanis, e clero et populo ad regis mandatum.’ He illustrates this sentence with his verses :

‘ Cum precibus cleris procedit, rege jubente,
Et populus sequitur, ordine quisque suo,
Regia mens gaudet ; præ plebs letatur et omnes.’ Elm. 94.

⁴⁵ Rolls Parl. v. 4. p. 109.

in Smithfield or Tower-hill. There were continual prosecutions for their opinions.⁴⁶

The establishment did not even spare its own prelates, who deviated from its prescribed tenets. Reginald Peacock, the bishop already noticed, who held some obnoxious sentiments, was arrested in his old age, and sent to the abbey of Thorney, with minute instructions, from the archbishop of Canterbury, as to his treatment in his confinement. Being a dignitary of the church, tho these orders subjected him to privations that he must have strongly felt, they were not painfully rigorous, but rather indulgent.⁴⁷

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

⁴⁶ Some of these prosecutions are printed in Wilkins's *Concilia*. They relate to the following persons : of these several were burnt. vol. 3.

1419.	R. Owtrede, p. 394.	1426.	T. Richmond, p. 487.
	W. Browne,	1428.	J. Jourdelay,
	R. Wyche, p. 395.		C. Dertford, p. 493.
1420.	W. James, p. 397.		R. Ruten, p. 494.
1422.	W. Taylour, p. 404.		W. Harvey,
1425.	Hatton, Fleming, p. 433.		J. Calle,
	W. Russell, p. 434.		R. Meingyn, p. 497.
	R. Hoke,		R. Monk,
	J. Drayton, p. 435.	1429.	T. Garentyr, p. 499.
			Sir T. Bagley, p. 515.

Also, John Bissmere was burnt, 16 Hen. VI.; and Bredon, a minor, was punished, 24 Hen. VI. Harl. 7048. In 1428, W. White was burnt. In 1430, R. Hounden, and two others. In 1438, a priest, and in 1440, another of much fame, called Sir Richard, were all burnt, besides others. Cowper Chron. Fabian.

“ 1. He shall have a secret, closed chamber, having a chimney and convenience within the abbey, where he may have sight to some altar, to bear mass; and that he pass not the said chamber.

“ 2. To have but one person that is sad and well disposed, to make his bed, and to make him fire, as it shall need.

“ 3. That he have no books to look on, but only a portuous, a mass-book, a psalter, a legend, and a Bible.

“ 4. That he have nothing to write with; no stuff to write upon.

“ 6. That he have competent fuel, according to his age, and as his necessity shall require.

“ 6. That he be served daily of meat, and dined, as a brother of the abbey is served when he is excused from the freytour; and somewhat better, after, as his disposition and reasonable appetite shall desire, conveniently after the good discretion of the said abbot.’ £.40 was assigned to the abbey for his feeding. Harl. MSS. 7048.

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

But the support of the establishment, was not intrusted merely to sermons, severities, or controversial logic. The poetry of the day was called in to its aid. Metrical verses against Lollards were part of the devices of their pageantry, and state banquets ;⁴⁸ and even ballads were written to stigmatize and burlesque them.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ See before, p. 12.

⁴⁹ One of these, obviously composed on sir John Oldcastle, is preserved in the Cotton library, Vespas. B 16. of which I shall modernize part of the orthography. It attempts some awkward witticisms on the knight's name :—

' He that can be Christes clerk
And know the knotts of his creed,
Now may see a wonder work,
Of hard haps to take good heed.
The doom of death is heavy drede
For him that would not mercy try.
Then is my rede;
For muck nor mede,
That no man melle * of lollardrie.

I say for myself that wist I never
But now, late, what it should be;
And by my troth, I have well lever
No more ken than my a, b, c.
To *lolle* so hie, in such degree,
It is no profit, perfecie;
Come; seek example to thee given
To beware of lollardrie.

The game is nought; to *lolle* so hie
That feet fail fondement.
And that it is a much folly
For false belief to be brent; (burnt)
That the Bible is always went (wout)
To jangle of Job or Jeremie;
That construe it after their intent,
For lewer lust hath in lollardrie.

It is unkindly for a knight
That should a king's castle keep,
To babble the Bible day and night,
In resting time, when he should sleep;
And carefully away to trepe
For all the chief of chivalry.
Well ought he to wail and weep,
That such lust hath in lollardrie.

* Meddle with.

In resolving to persecute, imprison, and destroy,
the possessioned church acted, but as all possessioned

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

An OLD-CASTLE was not repaired
With wasted walls that waver wide ;
The wages he full evil wared
With such a captain to abide,
That rereth not, for to ride
Against the king and his clergy :
With prue, poyne, and poor pride,
There is a point of lollardrie.
For many a man within a while
Shall abide his guilt full sore.
So fele * gostes to beguile,
He ought to rue evermore.
For his sorrow shall he never restore
What he venomed with envy,
But ban the burthen that he was of bore,†
Or ever has lust in lollardrie.
Every sheep that should be fed in field
And kept from wolf in his fold ;
He needs neither spear nor shield,
Nor in no Castle to be withhold.
For that the pasture is full cold,
In some season when it is dry ;
And numely, when the soil is sold
For lewde lust of lollardrie.
An Old-castle drew all down ;
It is full hard to rear it new ;
With such a congregation
That cast them to be untrue.
Who prays, will never bake nor brew,
Nor have wherewith to borrow nor buy,
Then may rot,‡ rub or rue
Under the colour of lollardrie.
That Castle is not for a king
That the walls be overthrown ;
And thát, well worse abiding,
When the captain away is flown,
And forsakes spear and mail
To creep from knighthood into clergy.
That is a bitter blast yblown
To be bold of lollardrie.
I trow that be no knight alive,
That would have done so open a shame ;
For that craft to study or strive,
It is no gentleman's game.
But if him lief to have a name
Of pilour under ipography,
And that were a foul defame
To have such love of lollardrie.

* Many spirits. † Was bearing. ‡ Plunder.

BOOK power has done, in every age, and under every system, whether civil or ecclesiastical; christian, infidel

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

III.

And, parde, lolle they never so long,
They that know law, make them loute.
God will not suffer them to be so strong,
To bring their purpose so about.
With savour foul and savour douce,
To reve, rot and robbery.
By reason thou shalt not long route,
While the tail is docked of lollardrie.
Of the head it is less charge,
When grace will not be his guide;
Nor suffer him for to leap at large,
But heavily his head to hide.
Where should he over-joust or ride
Against the chief of chivalrie,
Not hardy in no place to abide,
For all the sect of lollardrie.
O, God ! what unkindly ghost
Should grieve that God grudged nought
These Lollards that loth images most
With man's hands made and wrought,
And pilgrimages to be sought;
They say it is but mawmentrie.
He that this lore first up brought,
Had great lust in lollardrie :
He was full lewde that would believe
In figure made of stock or stone :
That none should desire reprieve
Never of Mary ; nor of John ;
Peter ; Paul ; nor other man
Canonized by clergy.
Then, the saints, every one,
Be little behoden to lollardrie.
And namely James among them all,
For he twice had judgment.
Much mischance may him besal
That last beheaded him in Kent.
And all that were of that assent,
To Christ of heaven and clepe and cry ;
Send them the same judgment,
And all the sect of lollardrie.
For that vengeance against kind
Was a point of cowardice ;
And namely, such one to beat or bind
That they might not stand, sit nor rise.
What doom would ye him devise
By law of arms or gentry,
But serve him in the same wise
All the sect of lollardrie.

or pagan. The resenting feelings of the natural man, are those of the wolf and the mastiff, against all who oppose or endanger. Alarmed and affronted self-love rushes into violence, becomes conscientiously vindictive, and delights to punish the obstinacy that resists, the censure that mortifies, and the hostility that would dispossess it. The worldly leaders of the papal hierarchy, therefore, only did to their rising opponents, what these, as far as they

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

When falsehood fails the foul folly,
Pride will pursue soon among,
Then willer-dome with old envy
Can no other way but wrong.
For sin and shame with sorrow strong,
That false belief is fain to fong
The lewde lust of lollardrie.

And under colour of such *lollyng*
To shape sudden insurrection
Against our liege lord king,
With false imagination;
And for the cursed conclusion
By dome of knighthood and clergy,
Now trueth to confusion,
The sorry sect of lollardrie.

For Holy Writ beith witness,
He that false is to his king,
That shameful death and hard distress
Shall be his dome at his ending.
Then *double death* for such *lollyng*
Is heavy when we shall heav'n eye.
Now, Lord, that madest of nought all things,
Defend us from all lollardrie.

I consider this Ballad to lead us to the real derivation of Lollard, which has been so much contested. It shews, that it was not taken from a man's name; as it gives us the verb from which it originated; to *Lolle*. I cannot yet ascertain the meaning of this word. It is neither Saxon, nor old English, nor German, nor Norman French. In Welsh, *llo* means foolish idle talk; and *llolian* and *lloliaw*, to babble and prate. This derivation would make lollard to imply a babbler. If the common English word to loll, or to lean idly, were the origin, then the term would express, an idler; but I think it must have some more express and applicable meaning. *Lollo*, in the Lapland language, is jealousy. *Lol*, in Persian, is shameless; and *lowlow*, frivolous. I have not had an opportunity of seeing whether the Bohemian language, from which it is more likely to have come, gives a more probable derivation. Lollard is not one of the twenty-five names of heretics mentioned in the edicts of the emperor Frederick II.

BOOK III,
REIGN OF HENRY VI.

were actuated by worldly motives, would have as unpityingly, and according to their self-flattering notions, as rightfully retaliated, if their power could have given efficacy to their will. As far as self-interest was the motive of either, the assailant and assailed, however mutually abusive, and mutually wrong, were equally reprehensible. When the emoluments of this world become the object of the contest; the dungeon and the gibbet, the sword and the stake, and in more barbarous times or countries, torture and cruelty, are its natural allies, and the ultimate deciders.

But the ecclesiastical statesmen of Henry's cabinet did not sufficiently discern, that the participation of the property of the church, was not the aim of all who now opposed or dissented from it. The disinterested reason and piety, unsullied by any hope of profit, were daily separating from it. Many minds were perceiving, and many hearts were feeling, that papal christianity was not the christianity of our Saviour and his apostles; and that the established hierarchy, and its artificial ramifications and appendages, had become the subverting contrast, instead of the beneficial resemblance, or continuation, of what the great founders had taught and instituted. To combat the criticisms, and to menace the disapprobation of such men with the terrors of persecution, was but making enthusiasm their duty, and suffering their happiness. Persecution has ever been powerless against sincerity: and from the presentation to the world of their heroic example; from diffusing the publicity of their objections; from rousing the attention of the indifferent, and from the irresistible sympathies, which inflicted cruelties, supported by

fortitude, and not merited by what the populace
deem moral guilt, always excite, persecution con-
tinually multiplies its enemies. Terror makes no
impression upon an excited mind. The feeling of
the martyrs, who, like the Indians of North America;
so often defied their tormentors to increase their
tortures, is the natural emotion of the enthusiastic
spirit. Persecution, therefore, never overcomes true
piety or conscientious resolution. It may annihilate
the sordid, the capricious, and the hypocrite, and
drive them from the ranks of the better spirits;
whom they disgrace by their co-operation; but it
always has been, and always will be defeated by sin-
cere faith, truth, rectitude, patience, and resignation.
The natural results of these virtues are ever ope-
rating to produce the victory; and a superior ben-
dition never fails to ensure it.

CHAP.
VII.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

But abstracted from these considerations, and from
the ultimate results, persecution tends to occasion
immediate evils to all who use it, of which they
have frequently become the victims. It drives the
opposed, from the public exhibition of themselves and
of their actions, into secret societies, secret combi-
nations, secret meetings, and secret conversations,
in which mind is kindled by mystery, and extra-
gance is fostered both by the seclusion and the exi-
gence. Fear begets hatred; endurance, impatience;
privation, spleen; and personal sufferings an eager-
ness for revenge. Prohibition never changes the
will, tho it may coerce the conduct. Secret assem-
blies bring men together, who would have never
else become acquainted; and severities combine
those in temporary harmony, whom their mental and
moral differences woud, until driven into contriving

BOOK III.
REIGN OF HENRY VI.

privacy and mutual danger, have always kept asunder. Persecution thus produces confederacies, and makes disloyalty credible, till the criminality of treason becomes determined by its success; and is actually varied by law, as each party triumphs. What government could be safe, or what country happy, in such a state of things!

The reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV. afford a melancholy illustration of all the ill effects of both religious and political persecutions; and as violence so generally fails, and is so often pernicious to its employers, how much wiser would it be, in the unfortunate periods of these mental collisions, to try to separate the conscientious from the interested; and to concede such improvements and reforms as the most dispassioned minds of both parties, looking only at truth, reason, and utility, and suspending all personal considerations, would agree to be wise and necessary! Much that is obsolete, unimportant, offensive, or injurious, becomes progressively attached to all establishments; and might be pruned with advantage, both to themselves and to their contemporaries. Such meliorations would take away the largest portion of the actual grievances, and pernicious evils, which, while man exists as he is, will be always arising from his former errors, present ignorance, and the course of time; and which no one ought to wish to continue: this conduct would satisfy and tranquillize the well meaning and the sincere; who, amid all their mistakes, are ever the great bulwarks of society, and are those whose countenance and feeling give the greatest danger to public clamor and political opposition. While these are kept steady, the more noisy and boisterous will

but fret and fume, without real danger or effective power. To act otherwise, is to fight the battle against nature and providence, two adversaries but little adverted to, yet against whose unceasing agency, altho' governments, hierarchies, and nations, have often struggled, it has been but to be defeated with irreparable discomfiture and annihilating destruction.⁵⁰

But no inquisitorial rigors, imprisonments, or burnings, availed. Cruelty excites too much sympathy, curiosity, indignation, fortitude, enthusiasm, disinterestedness, and impassioned determination; and proves too clearly the fears, the heartlessness, and the unworthiness of its abettors, to be of lasting service. Notwithstanding all these violent applications of unrestricted power, yet year after year, complaints were expressed in parliament of the increase and dangerous effect of heresy and heretics, in language which implies diffusing pertinacity among the people, and greater alarm in the government. In 1415, the year after Oldcastle's arrest, a petition of the Commons states, that great and intolerable errors and heresies, and rebellions, and obstinations against the king, against the ancient doctrine of their holy fathers, and the determination of the church, were

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

⁵⁰ The wisdom and moral beauty of the following remarks of the present archbishop of Cashel, deserve to be long remembered: 'We embrace that peculiar code of faith, and adhere to that peculiar religious community, to which God has attached us, and which our conscience approves: but in the House of our Heavenly Father there are many mansions. On speculative points, speculative men will differ; but whatsoever zeal may be displayed in the support of specific tenets, that zeal should never be stimulated to excess by an overweening conceit in our own, or by an uncharitable contempt of every other opinion. Disciples of the cross, the characteristic badge of our profession affords us one common bond of union. As Christians, we owe to all who are designated by that blessed name, fraternal affection; and to mankind in general, without distinction of persons or creeds, universal benevolence.' Prim. Visit. Charge. If these noble sentiments governed the world, there would be no religious wars, no religious persecutions, and no religious discord.

BOOK III. continually rising up among the common people.⁵¹ Two years afterwards, the parliamentary record recites, that many subjects, vulgarly called Lollards, machinated to annul the royal dignity, the state, and offices of the prelates, and the orders of the religious; to kill the king and bishops, to excite the monks and friars to leave the divine service for worldly occupations, and to spoil cathedral churches, and monasteries and convents, of their relics and goods.⁵² This document is the statute which directed Oldcastle to be burnt, and mentions that nearly four years before, 20,000 men, from various parts of England, had assembled in a great field, near St. Giles, to execute their purposes. That they meant to pursue some violent measures against the possessioned church, seems probable; but the allegation that they intended to kill the king, and make Oldcastle the regent of the land, is not credible.⁵³ Some years before, in 1409, we find a disposition in many to attack the clergy.⁵⁴ All sorts of illegal violences were now attributed to the Lollards. The petition which asserted that divers malefactors in various parts of the kingdom, collected in multitudes armed to make war, broke into parks and chases, wounded the keepers, and ousted many of their free tenements; also added, that they were *probably* of the opinions of the lollards, all lying maliciously in wait, or traitorously purposing to make insurrection or

⁵¹ Rolls Parl. 4. p. 81.

⁵² Ib. p. 109.

⁵³ Ib. p. 109. Rous, who lived near this time, states their imputed objects more probably. He says, they purposed to have kept the king under their subjection, and after, *by his authority*, to have destroyed the church of England, and to slay the prelates, and distribute their possessions after their indiscreet advices and pleasure. It was to the earl of Warwick that secret information was given of their intent; and he persuaded the king to intercept and disperse them. Rossi Hist. E. Warw. p. 212.

⁵⁴ See Fab. 316.

subversion of the catholic faith.⁵⁵ Eight years afterwards, in 1425, the bishop of Winchester still inveighed from the throne against heresy and lollardism.⁵⁶ As the bishop of Bath and Wells, likewise still more urgently in 1432.⁵⁷

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

But altho the resolute persecutions of the church failed to extirpate the new opinions, they seem to have created an insurrectionary mind, in those whom they endangered. In 1430, the Lollards, and their friends, are represented as sending messengers into various parts, exhorting the people to rise up against the clergy, and to seize their property. At Abingdon, a seditious meeting assembled, to pull down the monastery there, and chose their captain; but the lord protector being apprized of it, arrested, and beheaded the bailiff; and many of his party were hung up before the building.⁵⁸ The movement seems to have been extensive, for it is mentioned, that others of his supporters were executed in divers places and countries.⁵⁹ So little diminution of the evil was produced by the severities of the church, that in 1440, after a priest had been burnt for heresy, on Tower-hill, the people crowded afterwards to the place of his execution, and made oblations and prayers there; and by night, raised a great heap of stones, and placed a cross upon it. So many went on pilgrimage to it, that the king ordered the mayor to prevent, and punish the enthusiastic visitors. The old chronicler adds, "so that by this means, a great dislander ran upon the church, and especially upon such as had put him to death."⁶⁰

From all these facts it is evident, that a large

⁵⁵ Rolls Parl. 4. p. 114.

⁵⁶ Ib. p. 290.

⁵⁷ Ib. 388.

⁵⁸ Wals. MSS. Sloane, 1776. Fab. 422.

⁵⁹ Fab. 422.

⁶⁰ Fab. 436.

BOOK III. proportion of the population of the country was fully disposed for a state of battle with the ecclesiastical establishment which assailed them, and with the government that supported it.⁶¹ The materials for a civil war, on this ground, were every where accumulating ; and the disaffected only waited for a convenient opportunity, a plausible pretext, other popular irritations against the existing administrations, auxiliaries that could meet the first brunt of insulted power, and a chief of name, connections and power, sufficient to assure, or to begin the chances of success. Authority prosecuted and chastised till it destroyed all loyalty and veneration ; and converted peaceful obscurity into vindictive rebellion.⁶²

⁶¹ The warring state of mind which pervaded the kingdom at this time, is implied by the monk of Croyland's declaration, that the divisions of the kingdom were pervading every chapter, college, and convent. 529.

⁶² The severity to which the confiscation of the property of heretics was carried, if it failed to extirpate the heresy, could not fail to exasperate the public mind against the persecutors. The property of an heretic, had been ordered to be divided into three parts ; one to the secular power, another to the city in which he was condemned, and a third to his judge. But in England, in 1430, when Lyndewode wrote, the whole went to the king ; this was sufficiently distressing ; but the retroaction of this confiscation, was most revolting. Lyndewode puts it as a question : ' If a man should have been ten years an heretic, concealed ; and should not, even in his life, be condemned for heresy ; but should in the mean time, have given bonds, or alienated his possessions ; and it should afterwards be discovered, that he had been an heretic ; would his alienations and his bonds be void ? ' the answer given is, that they would be void, and could not prevent the forfeiture ; because, from the day that he fell into heresy, his property became confiscated by the law ; and must be forfeited to the crown : and from that time he lost all power of disposing of it.' Lyndew. Constit. Provinc. This author has given thirty double folio pages to his exhibition of the ordinances against heretics, and to his explaining commentary upon them ; an indication, that those laws were then in great operation. He finished his elaborate work—one of our first and fullest on ecclesiastical law in England—in 1430. He may be called the lord Coke of the English church. When we think of these inflictions, it seems wonderful, that our ancestors had fortitude and perseverance enough to accomplish the emancipation of their conscience, and just freedom from tyranny so unsparing.

C H A P. VIII.

Competition of York and Somerset.

THE deaths of Winchester, Suffolk, and the other obnoxious members of the administration, and royal household, did not change the measures of government. The cardinal of York survived, and the disastrous effects of mob-government satisfying every one, that the populace would be destroyers, not reformers, the queen recovered her influence. The ministry was again modelled to suit the politics of her own views and party, and of the possessioned church ; and the opposing portion of the nation finding no improvement practicable under Henry, began seriously to look forward to the hope of a new reign and the introduction of a new dynasty. Both of these, as Henry was yet childless, were certain of occurring on his demise, because the duke of York was the next presumptive heir, from another descent. But others saw that their effect was attainable in the king's lifetime, by this nobleman's regency, without disturbing the royal dignity. If Gloucester had lived, the succession would have been demanded by him ; but his death left York no competitors, except in the house of Somerset, every member of which resisted him, till generation after generation of this unfortunate family was successively extinguished. The Somersets assumed themselves to be the representatives of the Lancastrian line, when Henry the sixth's issue failed ; and stood, therefore,

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

BOOK III. invariably on its side, during all the conflicts that ensued both for the regency and the throne. When the incapacity for government, in which Henry had been educated and kept, was found to continue, a patriotic regency became the desire of the nation ; and at first the general wish extended no further. The public eye then turned to York as the fittest to take this station, which he claimed as his birthright, as he did afterwards the crown ; and the following sketch will shew how far his pretensions to either were founded.

The duke united in himself two branches, one paternal, the other maternal, of the posterity of Edward III. This sovereign's *fifth* son, Edmund, had left two children,¹ of whom the eldest fell, without issue, at Agincourt, and the other, the earl of Cambridge, had married the grand-daughter and heiress of the same king's *third* son Lionel ; and the heir of this marriage was the duke of York,² who became the competitor of Henry VI.

Henry was descended from Edward's *fourth* son, John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster.³ If York had possessed only the right of his paternal ancestry, Henry and John of Gaunt's descendants would have had the anterior title ; but York uniting also the earlier maternal line of descent, became, by that, as

¹ Edmund, the son of Edward III. and first duke of York, died 1 Aug. 1402. By Isabella, a Spanish princess, a daughter of Pedro the Cruel, he had these two sons. The wills of the two first dukes of York are published among the Royal and Noble Wills, pp. 187 & 219. The second son of Edward III. left no issue.

² Lionel, created by his father, Edward III. duke of Clarence, had only one daughter, Philippa, who married Roger Mortimer, the earl of March. Their children were, Edmond, who died without issue, and Anne, who married Richard earl of Cambridge, and by her brother's death became the heiress of Lionel. Her right descended to her son the duke of York, who was father to Edward IV.

³ See his will, Royal Wills, 148.

the first son's posterity ended in Richard II. the heir of Edward III., and therefore of the crown, before the Henrys could, by mere legal inheritance, succeed to it: hence, so far as the question rested on the ancient common law of the country, in its general rules of inheritance, the duke of York had a title to the English throne superior to that of Henry himself.

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

But the parliament had chosen to disturb the direct line of succession, by deposing Richard II. and by transferring the crown to Henry IV. and his issue. At that time the earl of March, the grandson of Lionel, was in reality the legal heir of Richard, if he left no issue; and during his life was so declared by parliament, and as such was designated to the throne.⁴ But the great ecclesiastical and other interests, which had called Henry IV. to his invasion, chose to pass by the rights of the earl of March, and for their own purposes to enthrone Henry. This violation of its legal claims was not forgiven nor forgotten by the family. It was to raise the earl of March's son to the crown, instead of Henry V. who had acceded to his prejudice, that the earl of Cambridge entered into those plots for which he suffered.⁵ And in the beginning of Henry the Sixth's reign, another of the March family, sir John Mortimer, asserting, at least in argument, its superior rights, was apprehended and executed.⁶ The duke of York had therefore the actual right to the crown, according to the English laws of real inheritance. But the

⁴ He was so proclaimed in the ninth year of Richard II. *Lel. Col. v. 2.* p. 481; and *5 Parl. R. 484.*

⁵ The autograph of his confession and address to Henry V. is in the Cotton Library, *Vesp. C 14*; and shews Monstrelet's correct information on the subject, in his *v. 4. p. 141.*

⁶ *Fab. 410, 411.*

BOOK III. house of Lancaster stood on the constitutional ground of parliamentary enactment. It was precisely the same question that existed between the house of Stuart and the house of Brunswick. The parliamentary title was with George II.; the legal common law title with the Pretender, who invaded him.⁷

REIGN OF HENRY VI.

The parliament having settled the crown in the Lancastrian line, while the duke of Gloucester lived, he also stood between the throne and York, because he would have succeeded to it on the parliamentary title. But his death put York into a new and formidable state of right, which seems not to have been adverted to by those, who so eagerly struck down Gloucester. By this nobleman's death, Henry VI. then having no issue, York actually stood as the presumptive heir to Henry VI. himself, excepting

⁷ On the comparison of the adverse claims of the Yorkists and Lancastrians to the throne, we may remark, that altho monarchy, with parliaments, has always been the constitution of this country, yet almost every dynasty that has been on the throne has acceded or reigned by parliamentary right, against hereditary right. William the Conqueror was elected, or admitted, to the prejudice of the ancient Saxon heir, Edgar Etheling. His son Henry I. was made king by the parliament, against his elder brother Robert's right, and procured his own family to be appointed to succeed him, to the exclusion of Robert's son. From Henry I. proceeded his grandson Henry II. and all our subsequent sovereigns. But the hereditary succession of this dynasty was again changed, on the death of Richard I. by the parliament giving the crown to John, to the disinheritance of his elder brother's son. Parliament deposed Edward II., to give the crown to his son Edward III.; and when it compelled Richard II. to resign, instead of letting the natural heir by inheritance, the earl of March, the living descendant of his eldest brother, succeed, it gave the crown to Henry IV. the son of a younger brother; and both Henry V. and VI. reigned to the prejudice of the hereditary right of the excluded family. When the parliament made Edward IV. king, the parliamentary and hereditary rights became united. They were again severed when Richard III. was made king; and also, when the crown was transferred, by parliament, to Henry VII. until Elizabeth, the daughter of Edward IV. was crowned. Henry VIII. as her son, united the two rights, and when her male line failed, the Stuarts acceded from her daughter. William III., Anne, and the Brunswicks, were also enthroned by parliamentary, against hereditary right. Therefore Henry VI. in reigning by his parliamentary title, had the practical constitution of the country in his favor.

so far as the Somersets could interfere, who were tainted with illegitimacy, a disabling brand in that day of proud nobility.⁸ So that in the year 1451, when he claimed the regency, he was both the presumptive heir to the crown, and to Henry, on the parliamentary right, and also by natural descent; and was actually entitled to the crown itself, according to the country's common law of lineal succession, in preference to Henry. This combination of immediate right of possession, and of presumptive right of succession was, of all other things, the most adapted to bring the volcanic state of the country into an explosive eruption; because it would satisfy the consciences of so many, whose moral feelings would have otherwise controlled their angry passions, and have kept them from all seditious and insurrectionary violence. But when the house of Lancaster tried to govern without parliament, or to force that by violence and trick to comply with its will, it shook its own right—the artificial parliamentary one—and made it seem virtue to many, to assert and rescue the privileges of conscience, and the constitutional liberties of the country, by putting the duke of York into the regency, even with treasonable violence; as

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

* Catherine Swinford, tho she became the third wife of John of Gaunt, was not married to him, when John Beaufort, his eldest son by her, and cardinal Beaufort, were born. They were consequently illegitimate at their birth. Parliament afterwards enacted their legitimacy, which may have answered the legal purposes for all questions of property, but could not remove the fact of the native imperfection. This eldest son, whose will is printed (Royal Wills, p. 208,) died in 1410, leaving four sons, besides daughters. The first, born 1401, died 1418. The second, John, made duke of Somerset, 21 H. VI. was the one who killed himself, and whose daughter married the uterine brother of Henry VI. by queen Catherine and Owen Tudor; the third, Edmund, became duke of Somerset on his brother's death, without issue male, in 1448, and fell at St. Albans, in 1455, when his son succeeded to his title, and became, like him, the steady adherent of Henry and Margaret, till he was beheaded at Tewkesbury in 1471.

BOOK III. the state capacity of the sovereign notoriously required some directing superintendence. No treason can be vindicated, but it may be accounted for. The truly conscientious will never commit it; but when reasons and plausibilities exist, that deceive the moral sense into an acquiescence with their predominant inclinations, treason loses its criminal and abhorrent aspect; and the mental sophistication mistakes rebellion for a patriotic duty.

When Henry VI. acceded, the earl of March, brother of the duke's mother, had the lineal right to the crown. He was fond of appearing with a retinue, exceeding that of other noblemen; and to remove him from the gaze of the English populace, he was appointed lord lieutenant of Ireland, and within six months afterwards, died in that country.⁹ The duke of York was then too young, not only to be dangerous, but to be even an object of suspicion. He was knighted with the king, and after the duke of Bedford's death, was sent to Normandy as the governor of France, or rather of so much of it as could be still retained. The absurdity of the appointment, as to its efficiency, is manifest by his military superintendents, keeping him inactive, because he was too young to act usefully.¹⁰ But when much older, in 1435, he went to France with 8000 men,¹¹ after the loss of Harfleur, and acted with creditable skill and valor. Three years after, he returned; and in July 1440, he was sent again as regent for five years.¹²

⁹ Wals. MSS. Sloane, 1776.

¹⁰ Ib. This was in 1428-9, ib. and he was not of age in 1432. Rolls Parl. 4. p. 397.

¹¹ Will. Wyrcestre, 457. On York's actions in France, see Monstrel. v. 7. p. 396. v. 8. p. 188. 284, 287-297.

¹² Rym. Fœd. 10, p. 786. In the Cotton MSS. Nero, C 10, is a page in Edward the Sixth's hand-writing, interesting for being this king's note,

His government of this country having been so far approved of, as to occasion his re-appointment, the duke of Somerset, who had been released from fifteen years of imprisonment, in France, coveting the same honor, secretly applied for it. His interest with the queen, and her friends, procured the revocation of York's nomination, and the royal grant of it to himself. Supplanted by an intrigue, which he thought to be crafty and ungenerous, York was indignant at the insult and disappointment; and an extinguishable hatred grew up in his bosom against this John duke of Somerset, craving for some dire revenge,¹³ which an incident in Normandy directed on his brother. John duke of Somerset died in March 1448,¹⁴ when his brother, Edmund, succeeded to his title and station. The gradual loss of every Norman town and fortress, made his regency unpopular.¹⁵ The English forces may have been insufficient to man the military posts, face the enemy, and keep

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

for his own information, of the articles desired by the duke of York, for his government of France, on this appointment. It is thus: 'Articles desired by the duke of York, for the government of Fraunce, 18 Henry VI. 1. To have the like power or command the duke of Bedford had. 2. To have 3 of theis 9 of every estate, one to be of counsel of Fraunce.'

Bishop of Lincoln,	Viscount Bemont,
Bishop of Norwich,	The lord Fannhope,
Bishop of Salisbury,	The lord Hungerford,
Sir Rauf Botiller,	Sir Tho. Popham.
Sir Tho. Stourton,	

A copy of these articles, at length, may be seen in W. Wyrcestre's MSS. addressed by his son to Edward IV. among the MSS. of the Antiq. Society, No. 41, but they are dated 1445.

¹³ Croyl. 518. Chron. of Jo. de Whethamstede, the abbot of Saint Albans at this time, published by Hearne, v. 2. p. 346. Somerset was made duke from earl of Somerset, in 1443. He was redeemed in 21 H. VI. Wals. MSS. For his actions in France, in 1439 and 1440, while earl, see Moust. v. 8. p. 181, 200-10; and for his conduct afterwards, when governor, see ib. 348. ¹⁴ See before, p. 54.

¹⁵ He was the nephew whom cardinal Beaufort had appointed to head his Bohemian crusade. On the disasters in France, under his command, see Moust. v. 9. p. 60-87.

BOOK
III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

28 April.
1450.

Siege of
Caen.

down the dissatisfied country ; but this Somerset was suspected of keeping fewer numbers than he was paid for.¹⁶ The siege of Caen supplied the tongue of public slander with an accusation, and the resentment of York, with a personal quarrel, as great as he had felt against the preceding duke. York, by the king's gift, had become the owner of this town, and had left it under the command of sir David Hall.

After the last struggle, and deciding defeat, at Formigny, in which above 3000 English perished, and 800 were taken prisoners,¹⁷ the king of France collected his forces to besiege Caen, to which the duke of Somerset, and his wife and family, had retired. He environed the town on every side. The English within observed their approaches in silence, but every man was at his loophole, and every captain at his post of superintendence. The French leaders had each different points of the town assigned for their several, but combined attacks ; and with their quarrels, morispikes, slings, and other engines, began the assault. While some of the defenders shot fiercely with their long-bows, others cast darts, and rolled down great stones and bars of iron ; at the same time javelins, firebrands, hot lead, and blocks, with flaming pitch and brimstone, flew with deadly activity among the assailants ; great rolls of moving and unsteadfast timber were also hung over

¹⁶ Hall's Chron. 216.

¹⁷ Monst. 9. p. 108-14. His statements are unaccountably disgraceful to the English. Their army 6 to 7000 men; the French, according to the report of the heralds, but 3000. The English lost 3773 persons; the French but 8. The early flight of two of the English captains, which caused the defeat, looks like premeditated treachery. Sir Robert Vere was one of these. The instructions of sir John Falstaff, in Wyrc. MSS. Antiq. Soc. MSS. N^o 41, refer the defeat to the divisions of the leaders, and the petty captains negligently tarrying.

the battlements, that no scaling ladder might catch a firm hold, nor any person climb with a sure footing; and if any scaling ladders became fixed on the walls, men were ready to overturn them, or strike down those who reached the summit. The king of France, exasperated by the successful resistance, sent to Paris for his great ordnance, resolved not to quit the town till he had reduced it by sword or famine.

CHAP.
VIII.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

His heavy artillery was daily discharged at the walls; did some damage to the town, but none to the castle, which stood on a rock, nor to the strong dungeon within it; but the shot was more alarming than injurious. One day a stone flew into the town, and fell between the duchess of Somerset and her children. Terrified by their danger and her own, she flew to her husband, and implored him to save them. Affected by her intreaties, the duke assembled the magistrates of the town, and recommended them to surrender it. Sir David Hall reminded him, that altho he was the king's lieutenant-general of the province, yet he had no right to talk of giving up the place. "This appertains to my lord and master, Richard duke of York, who hath given to me the custody of it, and with the divine help, I shall well defend it against the French king, and all his puissance, until my master succor me; for of men, money, and munitions, I trust I have sufficient." The duke insisted on his power, as representing the king's person. The faithful commander closed the discussion with a firm refusal to permit him to yield up the town without the duke of York's authority. Somerset is charged with inciting the town's people to an insurrection against sir David; and surrendered Caen to the French king, on the

Somerset surrenders.

BOOK
III.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.York in
Ireland.

condition that his family and himself might depart in safety, with all their property.¹⁸ Sir David refused to be included in the composition, and sailed to the duke of York, in Ireland, with a detail of the proceedings. The duke heard them with an indignation against Somerset, which never ceased to stimulate him to the most deadly animosity.¹⁹

York was in Ireland during the proceedings against Suffolk, and the sedition of Cade. He had been sent there to subdue a rebellion which had begun, but with a force inadequate enough to make him discontented with the ministry who had employed him. Yet his talent and judgment supplied the deficiency, and his conduct was so pleasing to the “wild and savage” Irish, that they contracted a steady attachment to his person and family.²⁰

During the summer of 1450, the whole popular mind continued to exhibit the indications of dissatisfaction and turbulence already noticed.²¹ Somerset was in France, and the administration in England was headed by the cardinal archbishop of York, the chancellor, whose measures were still unpopular.²²

September. York
advances
to Lon-
don;

In September, the court were alarmed by the news that the duke of York had quitted Ireland, and

¹⁸ On these events, see Hall's Chron. p. 216; and Monstrelet, v. 9. p. 123-36, who says, it was the strongest castle in all Normandy, p. 128.

¹⁹ Hall, p. 216. The instructions of Falstof, in Wyrcestre's MSS. one ‘of the king's great council,’ were written while the duke was besieged in Caen, and state, that he ‘was in great jeopardy of his person, and in doubt of losing all that country;’ and ordered relief ‘in all godly haste.’ Whether this aid was insufficient, or the duke surrendered before it arrived, does not appear.

²⁰ Hall, p. 213.

²¹ See before, p. 14.

²² The writer in 3 Fenn, 179, calls him ‘The cursed cardinal;’ and on his death, in February 1453, exclaims, ‘The cardinal is dead, and the king is relieved.’ He was appointed chancellor on the dismissal from that office of the archbishop of Canterbury, of the Buckingham family, on 31 Jan. 1450, (Parl. Rolls, v. 6. p. 172) when lord Beauchamp was made treasurer, and lord Cromwell chamberlain. W. Wyr. 473.

proceeded to his castle in Wales.²² That those who wished his presence and interference went to meet him, and that he solicited them to do so, appears from the murder of Tresham, a legal man, who had been formerly speaker of the house of commons.²³ His widow's petition for redress states, that the duke had written to him to meet him; and that on 21st September, a party of 160 men, armed with weapons, which are called jakkes, salettes, long swords, long debeofs, and bore speares, lay in wait for him under a hedge, in the highway, and as he came along, saying mattins to the Virgin, rushed upon him, smote him with a lancegay and other weapons, till he fell, and then plundered him of a collar of the king's livery, his chain of gold, his horse and money.²⁴ These assailants were the people of lord Grey.²⁵

A force under lord Lyle, son of the famous Talbot, was sent to stop York's advance, but this counter-action was ineffectual; the duke reached London with 4000 men, at the end of September; and proceeding to the palace at Westminster, knelt before the king, complained of the state of the kingdom, and implored him to summon a parliament.²⁶ He was afterwards charged with having come to this interview with a multitude of armed men, beating down the spears and walls of the presence-chamber in insolent contempt of his sovereign, who is said to have answered his desires and demands, as if inspired with the divine spirit. The royal wisdom is stated

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

²² W. Wyr. 473.

²³ He was speaker in 1439, 1441, 1447, 1449. Parl. Rolls, v. 5. p. 4. 36. 129. 172. After his death, sir William Oldhall was chosen, p. 210;

and Thomas Thorp in 1453, p. 227.

²⁴ Parl. Rolls, 5. p. 211.

²⁵ W. Wyr. 473.

²⁶ Ib.

BOOK III. to have covered him with confusion.²⁸ But his retiring so abashed may have arisen from the queen's not disguising her displeasure, and advising those violent measures against him, which Buckingham prevented. This lord fought and fell on the king's side in the first battle that occurred between the factions. But he was at this juncture dissatisfied that his two brothers had been dismissed from their high stations of chancellor and treasurer;²⁹ and therefore let York withdraw unmolested to his castle at Foderingay.³⁰ Somerset was now chosen to be the favorite adviser of the crown. He was made constable of England, and sent for out of Normandy. He arrived in England in the ensuing month, in such great popular hatred, from the belief that he had given up Normandy,³¹ as to weaken the government he had been called to uphold.

His complaint against Somerset.

The petition or complaint which York presented about this time to the king, has been preserved to us. It mentions the great grudging and rumor which was universal, that justice was not duly ministered, especially against those who had been indicted for treason, and against those who "were openly noised," of the crime. He recommended that it should be enforced against them, and offered to do his duty in

²⁸ This statement is in the preamble to the act of his attainder. Parl. Rolls, v. 5. p. 346.

²⁹ Letter, 1 Fenn, p. 27.

³⁰ W. Wyr. 473. This castle had been built by the first duke of York, the fifth son of Edward III.

³¹ Rymer, 11. p. 276. W. Wyr. 473. Fab. 454. The loss of France may have dissatisfied the national pride of England; but, from the pecuniary accounts in W. Wyr. MSS. above cited, the occupation of it was a financial burthen. The list of England's receipts from its revenues, under the duke of Bedford, from Oct. 1427 to Oct. 1428, was 57,466*l.*; but the payments from these were 68,408*l.* So that the revenue, in this year, fell short of the expenditure, 10,942*l.* MSS. Antiq. Soc. N° 41.

executing it, and urged the king to issue orders for their arrest.²³

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

The general feeling at this period has been thus sketched out to us by a chronicler of the age of Elizabeth. “ Many of the nobility and more of the mean estate, wisely pondering the state and condition of the realm, perceiving more loss than increase, more ruin than advancement to ensue daily, and remembering that France was conquered, and Normandy gained by the French, in so short a space, thought that the fault of all these miserable chances happened either because the king was not true in heart, or that he or his councils were not able of wit, policy, and circumspection, to rule the kingdom.”²⁴ Hence they began to wish a change in the dynasty, and to recollect the nearer descent of the duke of York from their revered Edward III. They circulated the opinion, that York’s popular conduct towards the Irish nation shewed, that if he who “ had brought that rude and savage nation to civil fashion and English urbanity, once ruled in England, he would depose evil counsellors, correct evil judges, and reform all unamended matters.”²⁵ But these were at present rather dangerous speculations, than actual conspiracy. They believed that it was possible to change the obnoxious system of government, without disturbing the throne; and parliament, under these impressions, assembled at Westminster, in the beginning of November.

The duke came to London with a force sufficient for his safety; and his friends, the duke of Norfolk, the earl of Salisbury, and his son, who became the

²³ The petition is in Fenn, 1. p. 67.

²⁴ Hall’s Chron. 219.

²⁵ Ib. 219.

BOOK III. celebrated Warwick, the earl of Devonshire, and lord Cobham, a man of considerable talent and experience,³⁵ also attended. Norfolk came with a great power,³⁶ and prepared to take a leading part. The result of these consultations, was an immediate resolution to impeach Somerset, who was now become the chief minister,³⁷ but who was so disliked by the populace, that they broke into his house near the Blackfryars, and plundered his goods. On the same day he had nearly perished in the Thames, as he was escaping from the mob, when he was taken into the earl of Devonshire's barge.³⁸

The parliament met on the 6th of November, and the cardinal of York urged them to provide for the safe custody of the sea ; to furnish aid for Aquitaine, and to pacify and punish that part of the population which was riotously disposed.³⁹ After sitting six weeks, it was prorogued to the 20th January,⁴⁰ and commissioners were sent to Norfolk, to tranquillize the people.⁴¹ One of the commons, a lawyer, moved, as the king had no issue, that his heir apparent should be declared, and he named the duke of York ; but he was sent to the Tower for the unseasonable proposition.⁴²

1451. The violence of the contending parties continued to agitate the nation. The earl of Devon besieged lord Bonville in Taunton, who surrendered himself to the duke of York and his friends.⁴³ York was met, beyond St. Albans, by a body from the western counties, that would have killed him, if sir William Oldhall had not protected him, nearly at the sacrifice

³⁵ Hall's Chron. 223.

³⁶ W. Wyr. 474. Fab. 453.

³⁷ Parl. Rolls, p. 213.

³⁸ W. Wyr. 475.

³⁹ W. Wyr. 474.

⁴⁰ Ib. 475.

⁴¹ Parl. Rolls, 5. p. 210.

⁴² 3 Fenn, 107.

⁴³ Ib. 275.

of his own life.⁴⁴ The earl Salisbury, returning from his son's marriage, had a serious conflict with lord Egremont, near York, which is noticed as the commencement of all the future evils.⁴⁵

In the parliament of this year, the duke of York exhibited several articles of impeachment against Somerset :⁴⁶ 1st, that Normandy was lost by or thro him : 2d, that he was the cause of the breaking of the truce, which gave the French king the pretext for renewing the war :⁴⁷ 3d, that he would give no counsel nor aid to the captains of divers strong places and garrisons, who had applied to him for advice and succor :⁴⁸ 4th, that he unnecessarily went into Rouen, when he might have been elsewhere, and gave up that town and several other places, to procure the enlargement of his children and property :⁴⁹ 5th, that

⁴⁴ 3 Fenn, 157. In May, Stafford, archbishop of Canterbury, died, and was succeeded by the cardinal of York, to whose dignity Bothe, bishop of Chester, was raised. The abbot of Gloucester had his see, and a doctor of the Carmelites that of Hereford. W. Wyr. 476. Bothe and the abbot were two of the obnoxious statesmen of the day.

⁴⁵ W. Wyr. 476.

⁴⁶ I have seen those only in the Cotton MSS. Vesp. C 14. They begin, 'These articles and pointes folowing geve, shewe and munstre, I, Richard duc of York, youre true liegeman, aud submit unto youre highnesse, summarilie purposing and declaryng thaym agenst Edmond duc of Somerset, for the grete welfare and interesse of youre majestie roialme,' p. 40.

⁴⁷ The duke particularly instances the taking of Fougeres, MS. ib. Monstrelet gives an account of this incident, v. 8. p. 427. York also charges Somerset with having, contrary to the truce, re-fortified several places that had been dismantled. MS. ib.

⁴⁸ 'Insomuch that he made no provision for the castle of Rouen, neither of men, stuffe, nor vitailie.' MS. ib.

⁴⁹ 'And, moreover, other good towns and castles, as Caadebek, Tan-carville, Monsterbillers, and Argues, key of all Canly not besieged, nor in peril of loss at that time.' MS. ib. This document shews Monstrelet's exactness in his account of the surrender of those places, v. 9. p. 87. York says, that this 'might not, nor hath not be done, nor seen by law, reson, or cronikel, or by course of war, by any leſtenant, altho he had been prisoner.' He gives the dukes of Orleans, Bourbon, and D'Alençon, as instances, that such surrenders as these were never made. Those princes never offered such terms for their liberation, 'tho they had many

BOOK
III.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

he was planning to give up Calais to the duke of Burgundy; and 6th, that he had received large sums at the yielding up of Anjou and Maine for the English there, which he had appropriated to his own use.

It was answered by Somerset's friends, that if this were an offence, it was but trespass, not treason. The duke of Norfolk, in a long speech, supported the accusation with great severity.⁵⁰ But the power and influence of the queen made his efforts unavailing. The commons petitioned to have the memory of Suffolk branded as a traitor, and his blood corrupted: and that Somerset, Suffolk's widow, the two prelates Bothe and the abbot of Gloucester, lord Hastings, and lord Stanley, should be removed from the royal court. The king by his chancellor answered, that he meant to be accompanied by virtuous persons only; that he did not know why those objected to should be displaced; but except such as were peers, and the few who actually waited upon him, he was willing that the rest should absent themselves for a year.⁵¹

York as-
sembles an
army;

But legal prosecutions became inadequate to suit the feelings of the enraged leaders, and their partisans. York in the middle of winter circulated proclamations, complaining of the conduct of the king's counsellors; and assembling a large force in the marches of Wales,

strong places of their own.' MS. ib. Yet general Melas, in our days, acted somewhat like this, when, to procure safety for himself and his army, he gave up the most important fortresses of Italy, after the battle of Marengo.

⁵⁰ See Norfolk's speech in 3 Fenn, 111-16. He quotes the book called 'L'Arbre de Bataille,' as the authority for punishing Somerset for the loss of towns and castles, without siege, and to prove, that 'a knight who flies for dread of battle should be beheaded.' p. 113.

⁵¹ Parl. Rolls, 5. p. 216. As to Suffolk, 'Le Roy s'advisera.' p. 226.

he declared that he moved only for the public welfare.³² The king, astonished at the sudden commotion, raised a powerful force, and in the middle of February, with Somerset and other lords, advanced to meet the duke.³³ To avoid an immediate collision, for which he thought his present strength unequal; York avoided the king's line of march, and passing on towards the metropolis, crossed the Thames at Kingston, and proceeded into Kent, where he was sure of receiving considerable reinforcements. On a heath near Dartford he encamped, and fortified himself with trenches and artillery. The king marched after him, and pitched his tent at Blackheath. But his friends, averse from risking an immediate contest, caused two bishops to be sent to York, to inquire the cause of his rebellious semblance. The duke asserted, that he had no intention to injure the king, but aimed to remove from him the evil counsellors, whom he called "the blood-suckers of the nobility, the plunderers of the clergy, and the oppressors of the commonalty," and again arraigned Somerset. The government doubting its ability to subdue York by force, the king affected to put the accused under restraint; and it is an indication that York, at this period, intended no larger object, that on this acquiescence he dissolved his army on the 1st of March, and came unguarded to the royal tent.³⁴

As he entered it, he beheld Somerset at liberty near the king, and felt that he was betrayed. He charged the obnoxious favorite with treason, bribery,

³² His subsequent attainder charges him with writing letters to many cities, boroughs, and towns, and to many private persons, to make a common insurrection. Parl. Rolls, 5. p. 346. ³³ Fab. 434.

³⁴ See Whethamstede's account, a contemporary, p. 348, 9; Fab. 455; and Hall's Chron. 226.

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

encamped at
Dartford;

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

and oppression ; who retorted the epithet of traitor, and accused him of meditating to seize the crown. York was now in his power, and was compelled to ride before the king to London, as a prisoner, where Henry held a council, to deliberate on their mutual arraignment. The discussions were interrupted by rumors, that the son of the imprisoned duke was marching with a large army to release his father. The queen and her friends became alarmed, and ambassadors at the same juncture arriving from Bourdeaux, to promise a revolt of Gascony, in favor of the English, if a protecting force was sent thither, the council determined not to risk a civil war,⁵⁵ but to let York go. After swearing an oath of allegiance and future fidelity, in public, at St. Paul's, he went immediately to his castle at Wigmore, in Wales ; and Somerset rose higher in favor with both king and queen. The veteran lord Talbot was sent to Gascony. He ravaged the country ; but the king of France concentrating a powerful force, this high-famed warrior fought an unsuccessful battle. The increased use of artillery made the personal prowess of the ancient chivalry less formidable ; and Talbot, who feared no martial competitor, and had never been subdued by any single opponent,⁵⁶ was struck by a fatal shot, which no valor or skill of arms could

August
1451.
Loss of
Aquitaine.

⁵⁵ Fab. 455. Hall, 227. 2 Lel. 495. The Rolls of Parliament give his oath at length. He swears to be Henry's humble subject and liegeman ; to bear him faith as his sovereign lord to his life's end ; not to attempt any thing against him, nor gather any assemblies of people without the king's command, or in his own defence. This oath he subscribed and sealed. Parl. Rolls, 5. p. 346.

⁵⁶ He was so dreaded by the French, that ' women to feare their young children would crye, "The Talbot commeth ! The Talbot commeth." Hall, p. 230. For the detail of the French conquest of Guienne, see Monst. 9. p. 159-190.

avert. The total loss of Aquitaine followed, after CHAP.
England had possessed it nearly three centuries.⁵⁷

VIII.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

The chancellor and treasurer having declared that the debts of the king amounted to 372,000*l.* and that his expenditure was 19,000*l.* a-year more than his income, and that the poor commons were full nigh destroyed by former taxations, the parliament passed an act to resume all the royal lands, and possessions, and property, which had been granted to any one by the king, except those which are there enumerated.⁵⁸

Somerset's power.

The duke of Somerset continued to be triumphant. His ascendancy in the government was complete. Both king and queen placed in him their unbounded confidence. He was made captain of Calais, in the room of the duke of Buckingham, and all honors were bestowed thro him. He governed all the kingdom. A council was held in September, in Coventry, to effect a conciliation between him and York, and their differences were discussed before the king, and submitted to the judgment of other lords.⁵⁹ A temporary arrangement appears to have been the result; and while the factions that divided the nation paused from their animosities, the queen endeavored to increase her popularity, by visiting some of the country gentry.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Of this province, Hall says, ‘The keeping of this duchy was neither costly nor troublesome to England, but both pleasant and profitable. Young gentlemen learned there the experience of war, and expert men were promoted to many rich offices, and great livings in it.’ It contained three archbishops, 34 bishops, 15 earldoms, 102 baronies, and above 1000 captainships and bailiwicks. Hall, 230. So that the loss of Normandy and Guienne was the loss of so much patronage to government, and of the means of providing for the younger branches of the English gentry. Hence, much of the discontent which resulted from their abandonment.

⁵⁸ Parl. Rolls, 217.

⁵⁹ W. Wyr. 476.

⁶⁰ Thus in April 1452, she went into Norfolk, and stayed two days at

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

1453.

The parliament met on the 6th of March, in the abbey at Reading, and was called upon from the throne, to provide for the sound and solid government of the kingdom.⁶¹ Grants of subsidies were obtained, not for three years, as had been customary, but with the unusual addition for the life of the king : 20,000 archers were also required and voted for the defence of the kingdom, to which every county and city were to contribute.⁶² Neither of these measures were adapted to increase the popularity of government. The parliament, after sitting twenty-two days only, was prorogued to the end of April, to meet at Westminster. There 7000 of the archers were taken off,⁶³ and the 13,000 were to be raised and kept together as an entire body ; but afterwards the levy of the whole was suspended for two years.⁶⁴ This alteration and virtual repeal of a favorite measure, announce that the government found that it had ventured upon a dangerous policy, from which it was expedient to retreat.

Somerset petitioned for the payment of 21,648*l. 10s.* due to him for the wages of himself and soldiers at Calais, after the duke of Buckingham's claim should be settled. This was enacted.⁶⁵ And on the 2d of July, the king in person thanked the commons for their liberal subsidy.⁶⁶ By his command, cardinal Kemp stated to the parliament, that his sovereign

Norwich, and sent for its ladies to come to her, to whom she gave a flattering reception. 1 Fenn, 69.

⁶¹ Parl. Rolls, 5. p. 227-229.

⁶² Ib. p. 231.

⁶³ Ib. p. 231. The proportions for each county are stated, p. 232.

⁶⁴ Ib. 233. 238. ⁶⁵ Ib. 234.

⁶⁶ His words were, 'We cordially thank you : and you must not doubt, that we will be a gracious and kind lord to you.' P. Rolls, 236. These were certainly the expressions of Henry's heart : This kindness of feeling was peculiarly his own.

was disposed to exert himself to put an end to the oppression, riots, and misdeeds, that had so long prevailed in the kingdom, and desired the members so to inform the people. He prorogued them to the 12th of November, at Reading, when, on the allegation of a great mortality in the town, their meeting was again deferred until the ensuing February.⁷⁷

CHAP.
VIII.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

But before this month arrived, a revolution in the administration took place, from a dangerous illness, which, in October 1453, abstracted the king from all public business, and all domestic society.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ P. Rolls, 238.

⁷⁸ We have a full description of Henry VI. from Blakman, a Carthusian monk, who had much intercourse with him. The following particulars are taken from his account:

Character
of
Henry VI.

‘ He was a man of pure simplicity of mind, without the least deceit or falsehood ; he did nothing by trick ; he always spoke truth, and performed every promise he made : he never knowingly would do an injury to any one ; he made rectitude and justice the rule of his public conduct.

‘ He was very devout and fond of religion ; he disliked the sports and business of the world ; he thought them frivolous ; he loved to read the Scriptures and the old chronicles ; he was assiduous in prayer ; he was fond of exhorting his friends and visitors, and especially young men, to avoid vice, to pursue virtue, and to attach themselves to piety.

‘ His demeanor at church was peculiarly reverential ; he would not sit indifferently down, or walk about during the service, as was then the fashion ; but with an uncovered head and bent knees, and his eyes continually on his book, or with his hands raised to heaven ; he performed earnestly his devotions ; and meditated deeply within, as the Scriptures were being read.

‘ He would not allow swords or spears to be brought into the church, nor contracts to be made, nor conversations to be carried on there. He was in the habit of sending epistles of advice to many of his clergy, full of moral exhortations, to the amazement of many. A bishop, who had been his confessor for ten years, declared, that he heard nothing wrong confessed ; only, venial faults.

‘ He delighted in female modesty ; and when he saw some young gentlewomen dancing in dresses which left the maternal parts of their necks uncovered, he turned away to his room, exclaiming, ‘ Fie ! fie ! for shame ! forsooth ye be to blame.’

‘ He was very liberal to the poor ; he never oppressed those subject to him with immoderate exactions, as other great men did ; but he was fond of living among them, as a father among his children.

‘ His kindness of feeling was so great, that hearing one day that a person of his household had been robbed, he sent him twenty nobles, with an admonition to take more care of his property, but with a request, not to prosecute the thief. When the scholars from his college at Eton,

BOOK
III.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

came to Windsor Castle, on a visit to some of his servants, he was fond of going to them, and giving them moral exhortations to be steadily virtuous. He usually added a present of money with this short address: ‘ Be good lads, meek and docile, and attend to your religion.’ But he did not like to see them at court, from his dread of their being contaminated by the dissolute examples of his courtiers.

‘ His dress was plain; he would not wear the up-pointed, hornlike toes, then in fashion. He had a great aversion to the vehement knockings on his doors, when a great man came. He frequently rebuked his lords for their violent oaths. His only affirmations were, ‘ forsooth, and forsooth.’ Coming one day from St. Albans to Cripplegate, he saw a quarter of a man impaled on a stake there, for treason; he was greatly shocked, and exclaimed, ‘ Take it away; I will not have any christian so cruelly treated on my account.’ Having heard that four gentlemen of noble birth were about to suffer for treason to him, he sent his pardon with an earnest expedition to the place of their punishment.

‘ His Sundnys were always consecrated to devotion, and to correspondent reading. His other days were passed in some public business, or in reading the Scriptures, or history, to which he was greatly attached. In all the church preferments that he gave, he was very careful to select proper persons. He was very affectionate to his two maternal brothers; Edmund, the father of Henry VII., and Jasper, earl of Pembroke; and had them carefully brought up, under the most honest and virtuous ecclesiastics.’ Blakman Collect. printed by Hearne, at the end of his Otterb. p. 288–302.

These facts shew Henry to have been a very estimable man; and if he had married a queen of less ambition, and of a more congenial temper, than the haughty and restless Margaret, his reign might have been much happier both to himself and his people.

C H A P. IX.

HENRY's dangerous Illness.—YORK appointed Protector; his Dismissal.—SOMERSET's Ascendancy.—YORK collects an Army.—First Battle of St. Albans.—YORK again appointed Protector; again displaced.—Reconciliation of the contending Parties.

THE affliction fell upon the king at Clarendon, and by disordering his mind, and depriving the administration of his apparent sanction, paralyzed all the functions of government.¹ He lost both sense and memory, and the use of his limbs. He could neither walk, stand, rise up, nor move:² and during this calamitous state, his queen, on the 13th of October, was brought to bed of a son, who became the unfortunate prince Edward—unfortunate in his premature death; and not less so on his birth, from the suspicions of his legitimacy which attended it,³ and from its adding to the distractions of the country, by putting aside the expected succession of the duke of York.

October
1453.

The king's
illness.

The king's almost suspended animation continuing unabated, overturned the government of Somerset and the queen: and the general feelings of the country brought forward York and his friends to assume the administration. In January 1454, Somerset was arrested in the queen's public chamber, and sent to the Tower. In his letter to the king of

¹ W. Wyr. 477.

² Whetham. p. 349.

³ Feb. 456.

BOOK Scotland, he states this to have been done for his
III. safety.⁴

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.
1454. The parliament was opened in February, at Reading, by the earl of Worcester, as treasurer of England, but was adjourned to meet at Westminster, in three days. The duke of York there addressed it as the royal commissioner.⁵

Having been informed by the chancellor, that 11,000*l.* were wanted for the defence of Calais, the commons represented the liberal subsidies they had granted at Reading, and added, that "they cannot, may not, and dare not, make any more grants, considering the great poverty and penury of the people." They reminded the government that they had been promised at Reading, that "a sad and wise council of discreet lords and others should be established, to whom all might have recourse for justice and equity; but that it had not yet been done; and they recommended a special attention to the internal peace of the nation."⁶

Cardinal Kemp's death. The death of the cardinal archbishop of Canterbury, on the 23d of March,⁷ occasioned a deputation from parliament to the king. Twelve spiritual and temporal peers were sent to Windsor, to state to him, if he could hear and understand them, the points on

⁴ It is in the Harl. MSS. 543. He says, 'As for my being in the Tower, it was done by th' advice of the lords of the king's council, which, as I understood, was mooste for the surety of my person.' p. 163.

⁵ The commons petitioned for the release of Thorp, who was in prison, on a verdict of 1000*l.* given against him for seizing the duke of York's goods; but the lords would not interfere. Parl. Rolls, v. 5. p. 239. Thorp was one of the leading instruments of the queen and Somerset, and was afterwards mentioned in that character. ⁶ Ib. p. 240.

⁷ Altho not liked by those who were dissatisfied with the measures of government, this prelate was estimated so highly by Henry, that when his death was mentioned to him, on his recovery, Henry remarked, 'One of the wisest lords in this land was dead.' 1 Fenn, p. 80.

which they were deputed to speak. These were to express an earnest desire for his relief from his great sickness, and to assure him that they would attend daily to such things as they should deem most promotive of the welfare of himself and of his kingdom. They were to proceed to no other subjects, unless the royal attention was adequate to hear them. But if his capacity permitted, they were to inquire as to his pleasure in supplying the vacancy of the see of Canterbury, to inform him that they had deposited the archiepiscopal seals in a coffer in his treasury, and to request him to name the discreet and sad council, for which the commons had solicited. The noble deputies were ordered to express these matters to no one but to the king.⁸

CHAP.
IX.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

The lords went to Windsor in execution of their mission. They waited till he had dined, and then the bishop of Chester respectfully addressed him on the two first articles. The sovereign returned no answer. The prelate explained the rest. Not a word: not a sign either of comprehension, or of reply was given from the royal body. Their laments and their exhortations produced no effect. Silence and insensibility only appeared. The lords then withdrew to dinner, and afterwards again visited the king. They moved him. They shook him, but could excite neither voice nor attention. They had him led by two men out of that room into another, and again by pulling him about, strove to rouse him from his senseless lethargy. But every effort was in vain. The royal person could eat, be moved, and breathe, but neither hear, understand, nor speak.

Lords visit
the king.

⁸ Parl. Rolls, 240, 1.

BOOK
III.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

They returned to parliament, and made this distressing report,⁹ and the duke of York was named protector and defender of the realm.¹⁰

The duke earnestly desired that they would express that it was upon their wish, and not by any presumption of his own, that he took upon himself this dignity.¹¹ The parliament, for the legal safety of all, passed an act to this effect, and made it like that which had been framed in the king's minority. The new power was to cease when the prince Edward attained the years of discretion : and it was declared, that when he reached that period, he should become the protector and defender, instead.¹² An income of 2000*l.* a year was attached to the dignity. Five peers, with a large fleet of ships of war, were appointed to guard the sea.¹³ And the needed subsidies were granted. Exertions were also made

⁹ The Parl. Rolls describe this interesting scene, p. 241. There is an authority from the council, dated 6 April, to the king's physician, to administer, as medicines, to him, a formidable catalogue of 'electuaries, potions, waters, syrups, confections, laxatives, clysters, gargles, head-purses, bathings, fomentations, embrocations, shaving of head, unctions, plasters, cerates, blisters, scarifications, &c.' 11 Rym. p. 347.

¹⁰ Parl. Rolls, 242. Rym. 11. p. 346.

¹¹ The duke's expressions seem to have been earnestly chosen, to obviate any suspicion of his own ambition. 'I desire and pray you, that it be enacted, that of yourself and of your free and mere disposition, ye desire, name, and call me to the said name and charge : and that, of any presumption of myself, I take there not upon me ; but only of the due and humble obeissance that I owe to do unto the king, our most dread and sovereign lord, and to you, the peerage of this land ; in whom, by th' occasion of th' infirmity of our said sovereign lord, resteth th' exercise of his authority : whose noble commandment I am as ready to perform and obey as any his liege man alive. And that at such time as it shall please our blessed Creator to restore his most noble person to healthful disposition, it shall like you so to declare and notify to his good grace.' P. Rolls, 5. p. 242. This language implies, that a respectful loyalty existed, either in himself, or in the parliament he addressed, towards his afflicted king.

¹² Parl. Rolls, 243.

¹³ They were, Richard earl of Salisbury, John earl of Shrewsbury, John earl of Worcester, James earl of Wiltshire, and John lord Stourton. Ib. 244.

to regulate and supply the proper expenses of the royal household.¹⁴ Penalties were enacted against those peers who declined to attend parliament.¹⁵ The young prince was created prince of Wales, and earl of Chester; and the king's brothers, by the second marriage of the queen dowager with Owen Tudor, who had been made earls of Richmond and Pembroke, were noticed in the parliamentary records.¹⁶ Somerset, arraigned in parliament¹⁷ by the duke of York, was kept still in prison.¹⁸ But the queen's friends ventured to charge the earl of Devon with high treason, tho but to produce his acquittal.¹⁹ This accusation being considered by the duke of York to blemish his own allegiance, roused him to declare that it touched his own honor; that he ever had been a true and humble liegeman to the king, and never thought nor meant the contrary; and that as a knight, he would put his body against any person whom it fitted him to answer, that should lay any charge of the said matter upon him. The lords assured him of their conviction of his faithful loyalty.²⁰

The duke of York was appointed to the high military command of governor of Calais, for seven years:

¹⁴ Parl. Rolls, 245, 6. The subsidies were to be levied 20 June 1454, in the proportions mentioned in the Rolls, p. 245.

¹⁵ Every archbishop and duke were to pay 100*l.*; every bishop and earl, 100 marcs; every abbot and baron, 40*l.* Ib. 248.

¹⁶ Ib. 249, 250.

¹⁷ Whethamsted, p. 349.

¹⁸ This fact is proved, by himself and lord Cobham being excepted from the fine for not attending parliament, 'being in prison.' P. Rolls, 248.

¹⁹ Ib. 249; probably for his besieging lord Bonville in Taunton. See before, p. 168.

²⁰ 'We knew never, nor at any time could conceive, but that ye be and have been true and faithful liegeman to the king, our sovereign lord, as it belongeth your estate to be; and so we know, take, accept, repute, hold, and declare you.' P. Rolls, 250.

BOOK III. but lessened by the pecuniary losses of his predecessors in the office, he desired the payment, before hand, of “a notable sum of money,” for the garrison. He also requested that what was due to him for his former services in Normandy and Ireland, for which his great jewels and plate were still in pledge,²¹ should be discharged. In this sessions lord Cromwell applied for surety of the peace against the duke of Exeter.²²

**REIGN OF
HENRY VI.**

The king’s malady continued all the summer and autumn, with a total suspension of his intellectual faculties. At Christmas it suddenly left him, and he sent his almoner with an offering to St. Edward’s shrine at Canterbury. The queen then came, to present to him her princely babe. The king asked his name. She told him, ‘Edward.’ He raised his hands, and thanked God for it. He declared he had not known the child till that time, nor any thing which had been said to him, nor where he had been during his illness. This state of lethargic idiotcy had lasted nearly a year. He stated himself to be in charity with all the world, and wished that all the peers were so too.²³ No sovereign seems to have had purer feelings, or more upright intentions than the meek and gentle Henry.

As the king recovered, the queen and her party,

²¹ P. Rolls, 254, 5. His appointment is dated 28 July. Rym. 11. p. 351. There is an order, dated 4 December, to Somerset, to deliver Calais to him. Ib. p. 359.

²² P. Rolls, 264. The earl Salisbury was appointed warden of the west marches, capital steward of the duchy of Lancaster, with the constabularies and master forestship of Pomfret and Galpea; so that ‘he had in rule all the king’s castles and honorable offices north of the Trent.’ Ib. p. 347.

²³ 1 Fenn, 80–2. The Parliament, which had been held at Westminster on 9 July 1454, was, on 31st, adjourned to 12 December, and on 13 December was prorogued to 14 Jan. 1455. P. Rolls, 321.

aided by the ecclesiastical influence, resumed their power; and Somerset, in February 1455, after an imprisonment of fourteen months, was set at liberty.²⁴ The protectorate of York was made to cease, with the malady which had occasioned it, and he was removed from the government of Calais.²⁵ To this envied post Somerset was appointed, and regained all his power in the administration of the country.

CHAP.
IX.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.
February,
1455.
Somerset's
re-ascen-
dency.

The competition between him and York raged but more fiercely from these mutations. The lords prevailed on these fiery spirits to submit their differences to arbitration.²⁶ Pecuniary claims might be so arranged. But what award can satisfy resentment, jealousy, or contending ambition? It was a mortal blow to the peace of York, to see Somerset again the principal actor about the sovereign, and the ruling master of the country.²⁷ He withdrew to the north in unappeased disgust and animosity. He saw the popular feeling to be accordant with his own, and he felt his own safety to be compromised. He entered into conferences with two great nobles, his relations, the earls of Warwick and Salisbury: He stated to them his conviction, that Somerset aimed to kill both him and them; and that he had lately been informed, that the obnoxious minister had persuaded the king to go secretly to Leicester, and, collecting his powerful friends in that part, to convene

²⁴ Rym. Fed. 11. p. 361. He gave for bail, on 5 February, the duke of Buckingham and three others, who were discharged on 31 March. p. 362.

²⁵ Ib. 363. York was removed from the protectorate on 25 February. Parl. Rolls, 321.

²⁶ Their submission was made on 4 March, to abide the decision of the archbishop of Canterbury, bishop of Ely, duke of Buckingham, earls of Wilts and Worcester, and three knights. 11 Rym. 362, 3.

²⁷ Whet. 350.

BOOK III. a parliament, for the destruction of York and his adherents, if they came ; and to deprive them of their dignity and property for disobedient contumacy, if they should stay away. He recommended the most violent resolutions against Somerset—either his death or exile.*

**REIGN OF
HENRY VI.**

A deadly crisis had now arrived between these two noblemen. Irascible ambition, and tenacious pride, had brought their quarrel to a mortal issue. Somerset could not pardon his fourteen months imprisonment, nor York the disgrace of being superseded by such a rival. Neither was safe while either was alive ; and the mental factions in the nation inflamed this mutual animosity. But up to this period, there is no evidence that any plan or intention had been formed of dethroning Henry. The regency of York, and its consequence, a new and more popular administration, appear to have been the extent of the views of the opposing classes at that time, and of his own ambition.

May,
1455.
Beginning
of the civil
war.

As York had done before, he now marched in the spring towards London, with his military retainers, to enforce the convocation of a parliament, and to expel Somerset. The earls of Salisbury and Warwick, and lord Cobham, joined him with their forces. The king's government, aware that York had too many friends in the metropolis, to be resisted there, resolved to meet him in the north, and put the issue at once to a martial field. Accordingly, the dukes of Somerset and Buckingham, with earl Strafford, the son of the latter, and the earl of Northumberland and Wiltshire, and lord Clifford, left Westminster on 20th May. On the same day, York had reached

* Whet. 351, 2.

Royston, and from thence, sent letters to the chancellor, asserting his intentions to keep his loyalty unspotted and unbruised ; to lay aside his own particular quarrels, and to do nothing contrary to the honor and welfare of the king and people ; he solicited the prelate to issue the censures of the church against every one that should purpose any injury to the sovereign : he declared, that his enemies had misrepresented his coming with a military power ; and intimating a suspicion, that violence was intended against himself, he protested, that he marched in arms only to protect himself from the danger that threatened him.²⁹ At Ware, on the next day, he wrote a letter, professing much loyalty to the king, and referring to his address to the chancellor ; and on the 22d May, he reached St. Albans, where he found the regal forces already stationed. These letters were concealed from Henry, whom York, in the morning, made some unavailing attempts to see.³⁰

On 21st May, the king had passed the night at Watford, and on the next day, reached St. Albans, with the dukes of Somerset and Buckingham, the earls of Pembroke, Northumberland, Devonshire, Stafford, Dorset, and Wiltshire, and the lords Clifford, Sudeley, and Roos. These noblemen constituted that portion of the nobility who had combined against the York party. They were attended by

CHAP.
IX.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

²⁹ Parl. Rolls, 280, 1.

³⁰ Ib. 281, 2. ‘ And the said 22d day, our said cousins, hearing of our being in the said town of St. Albans, came thither, desiring, in full lowly wise, to have had knowledge of our intent and pleasure of their demeaning, touching the matter in their said letters, and to come to our presence. Whereunto, about 12 of the clock of that same day, by the advice of the said Edmund, (d. Somerset) Th. Thorp, and W. Joseph, it was, as we conceive, without our knowledge, answered unto them, that then we had not seen the same letters.’ Such is the same statement put, in the king’s name, on the Rolls of Parliament, p. 282.

BOOK
III.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

their knights, squires, gentlemen, and yeomanry, but their whole force was not much above 2000 men.³¹ This shews, that the first struggle was between the nobility themselves ; the public, as yet, stood aloof from such a deadly contest.

The king's banner was pitched in the town, in St. Peter's-street, and his troops were immediately stationed to guard all the barriers, under the command of lord Clifford. York and his friends were in the Seyfield, near the town, and remained from seven o'clock in the morning, for three hours, inactive, but in anxious deliberation.

It was a moment of the greatest solicitude ; all the noble competitors, on each side, were there. The promptitude of the royal movement, announced the firm decision of the court, to take the dread arbitrament of battle ; and as York and his friends had passed into the full depth of legal treason, they had no alternative but victory or death.

The duke of Buckingham coming to inquire if their intention were pacific,³² their council ended, in sending a message to the king, which, after a soothing preamble, added this requisition : “ Please it your majesty royal, to deliver up such as we will accuse, and they to have like as they deserved ; and this done, you to be honorably worshipped, as most rightful king.” Foreseeing that this request might be met with temporary promises given, as they intimate had been done before, only to be broken, they concluded with, “ we will not now slack for no such

³¹ Stowe has left us a MS. account of this battle, taken from some work, which he does not describe ; but that it was written by a contemporary, and about the time, appears from its calling Henry, several times, ‘ our sovereign lord.’ Henry ceased to be so in 1460, and the battle was in 1455. It is in the Harleian MSS. N° 545, and must have been composed between 1455 and 1460. ³² Wheth. 353.

promise or oath, until we have them which have deserved death ; or else we, therefore, to die.”³³

The confederated nobles must have been surprised to have received from Henry this high-toned and peremptory answer :—“ I, kyng Henry, charge and command, that no manner person of what degree, estat or condition that ever he be, abide not; but that they avoid the field ; and nowght to be so hardy to make resistance against me in my own realme : for I shall knowe what traitor dare to be so bold to array any people in my own land, thro which I am in great disease and heaviness. By that faith I owe unto St. Edward and unto the crown of England, I shall destroy then every mother’s son, and eke, they to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, that may be taken afterwards of them ; to make an example for all such traitors, to beware for to make any rising of people within mine own land, and thus traiterously to abide their king and governor. And for a conclusion, rather than they shall have any lord that here is with me at this time, I shall this day, for their sake in this quarrel, myself live and die.”³⁴

These menaces left no hope but to the successful sword. York’s force was 3000 men : he addressed his army with energy, and at noon assaulted the barriers of the town in three places. The king was then sheltered in the house of the hundredor of the town ; but hearing of the duke’s attack, he is stated to have ordered his men to slay all that should be taken of the Yorkist army.³⁵ Lord Clifford’s defence

CHAP.
IX.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

22 May,
1455.
First battle
of St. Al-
bans.

³³ Harl. MSS. 545.

³⁴ We owe this document to the same MS. The Parliamentary Record dates the battle, 22 May. p. 282.

³⁵ So this contemporary account mentions ; but these were probably not orders issuing from Henry, but given in his name. He was too mild to forbid quarter.

BOOK III. was so steady, that all the assaults failed. Perceiving this result, Warwick moved to the garden-side of the town, and his men penetrating into it there, blew up their trumpets, and shouted "A Warwick! a Warwick!" with an exulting noise, that roused their friends to new efforts, and disheartened their opponents. Such sudden clamors of triumph exaggerate the new forces and their successes; and in a battle, the impression of a moment often gives victory or defeat. The barriers were now burst thro, and it became a deadly conflict, hand to hand in the streets.²⁶ The great chieftains on the king's side, feeling it to be their personal battle, put themselves forward with indignant rivalry and defying bravery. The event, from their resolute exertions, was for some time doubtful. The place became strewed with dead.²⁷ But the dispositions as well as the desperate energies of the duke of York, prevailed. He was assiduous, from the reserves he set apart, to reinforce every point that was pressed, and to send fresh men to replace the wounded and the weary. His arrows disabled the royal leaders;²⁸ and Somerset, Northumberland, and Clifford falling, their troops gave way, and fled over the hedges and gardens, throwing off their armor in the ditches and woods, to facilitate their escape.²⁹ Sir Philip Wentworth cast down the king's standard, to provide for his own safety; for which

²⁶ Harl. MSS. No. 545.

²⁷ The abbot describes what he saw in his own town; one lying with his brains dashed out; another without his arm; some with the arrow in the throat, and others with the chest pierced. He heard the shield striking shield, and the sword clashing on sword. Whet. p. 353.

²⁸ Henry was struck in the neck, and the duke of Buckingham and lord Sudeley were hurt in their faces with arrows. The earl of Stafford in his right hand; and the earl of Dorset was so sorely wounded, as to be carried home in a cart. Harl. MSS. 545.

²⁹ Harl. MSS. 545.

unknightly deed, even his opponents threatened to hang him :⁴⁰ and Henry finding himself left alone and bleeding,⁴¹ and the shafts still flying about him, withdrew to the house of a tanner. There York came respectfully to him, and after permitting his victorious troops to have that plunder in St. Albans, for which the ruder men from the north were always eager,⁴² he conducted him, with reverence, the next day to London. The bodies of Somerset, the earl of Northumberland, and lord Clifford, the persons most obnoxious to the conqueror, were found among the slain, and buried. Buckingham was much wounded, and Wiltshire escaped. The slain were few, but the issue of the battle was of deciding importance, from the deaths of the courtly nobles.⁴³

CHAP.
IX.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

The immediate result of the victory, was the appointment of York to be the constable of England; Warwick to be captain of Calais; and viscount Bourchier, treasurer of England.⁴⁴ The duke of Buckingham soon after joined the triumphant party,

⁴⁰ 1 Fenn, 107.⁴¹ The subsequent impeachment of York mentions his wound : ‘your roiall persone was sore herte, and in grete perell of youre lif.’ Parl. Rolls, 5 p. 347.⁴² Whet. describes those as more fierce, and ready for battle and blood-shed, and more greedy of plunder. p. 357.⁴³ The Harl. MS. distinctly names, besides Somerset, Northumberland, and Clifford, 14 squires, 1 gentleman and 4 yeomen, who fell; besides 25 more whose names were not known, and makes 48 persons, the whole number buried on the king’s part. Yet the romancing Hall states 8000 men to have fallen on the king’s side, which is almost double the amount of all the troops, of both parties in the battle. The abbot, who was on the spot, gives the force of York as only 3000, and the Harl. MS. states the king’s as 2000 and more. The original letter, in Fenn, 1. p. 100, mentions only six score persons to have fallen of the king’s men. It was the death of the leaders, not the number of the killed, that made the victory so complete.⁴⁴ 1 Fenn, 102. Parl. Rolls, 5. p. 341. Warwick was also made great captain of the sea, with 1000*l.* a year. Ib. 347.

BOOK III. and the earl of Wiltshire solicited a similar reconciliation.⁴⁵ A false rumor, that three of the king's household had confederated to assassinate the duke of York, occasioned the citizens of London to arm themselves in a tumultuary insurrection.⁴⁶

REIGN OF HENRY VI.

The march of the king's army to St. Albans, was ascribed to the advice of lord Cromwell, who, tho of the queen's party, had contributed to the downfall of Suffolk.⁴⁷ The partisans of each faction, were still so mistrustful of the other, that the men of York, Warwick, and Salisbury, went about in harness, with weapons unusual in a city, and sent barges full of arms to their lords at Westminster. Proclamations were issued, to forbid this military demeanor.⁴⁸

In June, the king again became diseased.⁴⁹ In July, the parliament met. The fallen Somerset was charged with having moved the king to mistrust the duke of York, and with having collected an army to destroy him, and with suppressing the letters that declared his pacific intentions. No protectorate was re-established, but the king's pardon was given in an express statute to York, Warwick, Salisbury, and all their adherents, for having taken arms.⁵⁰ And it is a strong indication that York, at this time, had formed no plot to attempt the crown, that he,

⁴⁵ 1 Fenn, 105.

⁴⁶ Ib.

⁴⁷ 1 Fenn, 110. But the blame of the battle was imputed to Somerset, Thorpe, now a baron of the exchequer, and another person, Whet. 370; especially by concealing York's letters. Parl. Rolls, 282. These were deprived of all their offices and emoluments, ib. p. 342; and imprisoned for twelve years, ib. 333.

⁴⁸ Ib. 112.

⁴⁹ An order, dated 5th June 1455, commanding the dean of Salisbury's attendance on the king, as a physician, states his majesty to be then occupied and labored with sickness and infirmities. Rym. Fœd. 11. 366. 1 Fenn, 119.

⁵⁰ Parl. Rolls, 5. p. 282. By the names annexed, the house of lords appears, on this occasion, to have consisted of 2 archbishops, 2 dukes, 11 bishops, 6 earls, 2 viscounts, 18 abbots, 2 priors, and 17 barons, ib.

tho the victor in the late battle, took, on the 24th of July, a solemn oath of allegiance to Henry, with the other lords.⁵¹ After which, the parliament was prorogued to the 12th of November.⁵²

In October, the king's health again varied;⁵³ and in November, York opened the parliament, as the king's lieutenant. The commons petitioned the lords, that if his majesty could not attend to the defence of the country, an able person should be appointed protector. There seems to have been some hesitation in the lords, to revive this high office; and the commons, after stating that great riots had occurred in the western counties, again urged their request. The chancellor consulted the lords. They agreed upon the expediency of compliance: and the duke was appointed protector and defender of the kingdom, with an income of 3000 marcs. He desired to be excused from the task, but his real or political reluctance was disregarded.⁵⁴ The lower house described the commotions in Cornwall, Devon, and Somerset, to be tumultuary contests between the adherents of lord Bonville and the earl of Devon, and complained especially of the latter's attacking and robbing the church of Exeter, with 800 horse and

⁵¹ The duke of York began the oath by laying his hand on his breast, and taking the king by the hand. Its substance was, 'I shall truly and faithfully keep the liegaunce that I owe unto you, my most sovereign lord; and to do all that may be to the welfare, honor, and safeguard of your most noble person and royal estate, pre-eminence and prerogative. And I shall, at no time, will or consent to that which might in anywise be to the prejudice of your person, dignity, corone or estate; and I shall, with all my power, resist and withstand all them that would presume to attempt the contrary.' P. Rolls, 282. The duke of Buckingham and the lords, kneeling, requested the king to shew no more grace to York, or others, if they attempted similar hostilities. Ib. p. 347.

⁵² Ib. 283.

⁵³ 1 Fenn, 119.

⁵⁴ Parl. Rolls, 284, 5. This office was to end, when prince Edward reached the age of discretion, if he should then wish to assume it himself. Ib. 289.

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

4000 foot ; and suggested, that the parliament should be prorogued or dissolved, that these disturbances might be quelled.⁵⁵ On the 17th of November, the duke obtained the explanations he required, as to the authority he was to exercise ; the next day he accepted the office, and four days afterwards the privy council was directed to provide and speed all such matters as should concern the good governance of the land. Edward was created prince of Wales and duke of Cornwall. The former royal grants were resumed with numerous exceptions, and in the middle of December the parliament was prorogued for a month.⁵⁶

February
1456.
York dis-
placed.

Thus far York had made no pretensions to the crown, and the parliament had exhibited no intentions of affecting it. The change was but a new administration with a new chief presider ; but this alteration did not last long ; suspicion, or the competition of interest, overturned this arrangement. The parliament had been suspended to the 14th of January : and on the 25th of February, the queen and her friends regained such an ascendancy over the king and parliament, that the duke of York was on that day discharged from his protectorate.⁵⁷ The king and queen seem not to have resided together. He is mentioned more than once as at Sheen, near Richmond, and she, at one time at Tutbury and afterwards at Chester.⁵⁸ But, apprehending the

⁵⁵ Parl. Rolls, 285; 332.

⁵⁶ Ib. 286-321.

⁵⁷ Ib. 321. Fabian, 461 : he adds, that she discharged earl Salisbury from the chancellorship. But in December 1455, Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, was chancellor. Parl. Rolls, 321. If Fabian be correct, the prelate was displaced that Salisbury might be appointed, and this, offending the church, may have caused the next revolution of the ministry.

⁵⁸ See 1 Fenn, 132 and 134. About this time a disturbance occurred in London, respecting foreign merchants, which Fabian details, p. 460; and to which the latter alludes in 1 Fenn, p. 132.

hostility of the city of London, to her measures, she removed him from it.⁵⁰ The duke of York, from his castle at Sendal, watched her movements; at this period the Kentish people were disposed to be unquiet,⁵¹ and lord Egremont, one of the queen's friends, made a serious attack on the earl of Warwick, in which many were slain.⁵²

CHAP.
IX.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

Affairs rested in this position about two years: but the queen during this period is charged with entering into a conspiracy to destroy the duke of York and his friends; and that to mature it, she induced the king to make a progress into Warwickshire, for his health and recreation, and so with hawking and hunting, to avert all suspicion, brought him to Coventry, where the duke of York, and Salisbury and Warwick, were invited to meet them. Suspecting no treason, these noblemen arrived there unguarded; but a secret intimation of the intended mischief reached them in time to save their lives. They quitted the town with precipitation, and escaped: York to his castle at Wigmore, Salisbury to Middleham, and Warwick to Calais. This frustrated attempt, made the enmity between them and Margaret implacable and deadly.⁵³ No moderate measures, no future confidence, no solid peace could afterwards ensue.

Queen's
plans
against
him and
his friends.

The king, whose heart was honest, and his disposition averse to all violence or discord, endeavored to effect a reconciliation between them,⁵⁴ and invited

1458.
Henry's
effort to
conciliate
the nobles.⁵⁰ Fab. 461. ⁵¹ 1 Fenn, 137. ⁵² Fab. 462. Hall, 236.⁵³ Hall, 236. It was afterwards made one of the treasonable charges against York, that at divers times, when sent for to come to the king's council, he disobeyed. Parl. Rolls, 348. Salisbury had before excused himself from coming to London, on account of sickness. 1 Fenn, 149.⁵⁴ Whethamsted says, that the idea occurred to the king, as he was reading in his books alone.

BOOK III. the chief lords, of both parties, to London; they came in the beginning of the year, but with armed forces sufficient to prevent that sudden treachery,[“] which each expected now from the other. In January, York took his abode at his mansion of Baynards castle, within the city; and the young duke of Somerset, with the duke of Exeter, were lodged without Temple-bar. In February, Warwick came with a great band from Calais, to the Gray Fryars; and in the middle of March, the king and queen, with a large retinue, occupied the bishop's palace. The warlike followers of all were so numerous, and so mutually hostile, that the lord mayor had daily 5000 citizens well armed, of whom nearly half kept guard all the night.[“] An earnest negotiation followed, in which the archbishop of Canterbury took a zealous part.[“] A temporary reconciliation was at last effected, and public processions were made to St. Paul's, to consecrate, to perpetuate, and to promulgate the amity.[“] The king went in his royal habit and crown. Before him, the according nobles walked hand in hand; Somerset with Salisbury, and Exeter with Warwick; while after the king, the duke of York led the queen, with great seeming familiarity.[“] But it was only the theatrical pageantry of proud spirits, disdaining the reconciliation they condescended to act. Its pacific effects did not long survive its popular representation. Neither party had yet suffered enough, to teach them the folly of that turbulent

[“] York attended with 140 horse, his own household only; Salisbury with 400 horse, 80 knights, and some esquires; Somerset with 200 horse. 1 Fenn, 152, 1. Warwick received permission to come to London, with 24 foreigners. 1 Rym. 408. [“] Fab. 463.

[“] 1 Fenn, 155. For the king's award on their pecuniary differences, see Whet. 418-498, and Rym. Fœd. v. 11. [“] Fab. 464.

[“] Hall, 238.

haughtiness, which a mechanical religion of the atoning ceremonies they could purchase, prevented them from feeling to be crime. Yet the ocular exhibition delighted the well-disposed ; for it awakened those sweet sensibilities of the human heart, which make us welcome every appearance of affection, friendship, kindness, and tranquillity. The rude poetry of the day, gave its voice to express the public feeling, and to shew that the most violent periods cannot wholly suppress the lovely charities of human nature.⁶⁰

CHAP.
IX.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

⁶⁰ The following Ballad was composed on the occasion, which may be read as a specimen of the feeling, tho' not of the poetry, of the truly patriotic. I modernize some of its orthography. It is in the British Museum, MSS. Vesp. B 16.

When charity is chosen with states to stand,
Stedfast and still without distance,
Then wrath may be exiled out of this land,
And God, our guide, to have the governance.

Wisdom and wealth, with all pleasure,
May rightful reign, and prosperity ;
For love hath underlaid wrathful venaunce.
Rejoice ! England ! our lords accorded be.

Rejoice ! and thank God for evermore ;
For now shall increase thy conciliation.
Our enemies quaken and dreaden full sore,
That peace is made, where was division.

Which to them is a great confusion,
And to us joy and felicité.
God hold them long in every season,
That Angland may rejoice : concord and unité !

Now is sorrow with shame fled into Fraunce,
As a felon that hath forsworn this loade ;
Love hath put out malicious governaunce,
In every place, both free and bondē.

In Yorke, in Somerset, as I understande,
In Warrewik also, is love and charité ;
In Salisbury eke, and in Northumberlunde,
That every man may rejoice, concord and unité.

Egremont and Clifford; with other aforesaid,
Ben set in the same opwyon.
In every quarter love is thus laide ;
Grace and wisdom hath thus the dominacion.

O 2

Awake !

BOOK
III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.
The dis-
cord re-
vives.

A disastrous change was effected, by the consequences of a petty fray, or rather the minds of both parties continued to be so combustible, that the first spark re-inflamed them; a servant of the king's quarrelled with one of Warwick's, and attacked him. The earl's man fled, but the other being wounded, his fellow-menials assembled in great number, and watching the earl as he went from the council to his

Awake! wealth! and walk in this region,
Round about in town and cité;
And thanke them that brought it to this conclusion.
Rejoice! England! to concord and unité.

At Paul's in London, with great renown,
On oure Ladyday in Lent, this peace was wrought.
The kynge, the quene, with lords many oone,
To worship that Virgine as they ought,

Went in a procession, and spared right nought,
In sighte of all the commonalte,
In token that love was in heart and thought.
Rejoice! England! to concord and unity.

Ther was between them lovely countenance,
Which was great joy to all that there were,
That long tyme hadden been in variance,
As friends for ever, that had been in fear,

They wenten togeder, and made good cheer.
France and Britayne! repent shall thee;
For the bargayn shall ye abide full dere.
Rejoice! England! to concord and unity.

Our sovereign lord king, God help alway;
The queen, and the archbishop of Canterbury;
And the bishop of Wynchestre, chancellor of Anglond,
And other that han labored to this loveday.

God preserve them, we pray heartily;
And London; for they full diligently
Kept the peace, in trouble and adversity;
To bring in rest they laboured ful truly.
Rejoice! England! to concord and unity.

Of three things I prize the worthful city:
The first, the true faith that thei have to the kyng;
The second, of love to the commonalty;
The third, good will for evermore keeping.

The which God maintain evermore duryng,
And save the mayor, and all the worthy city;
And that is amiss, God bring to amendyng,
That England unay rejoice to concord and unity.

barge, assailed him with their swords, while others wielded their spits and forks. The earl having few attendants, was in great danger, and with difficulty escaped to the river. This unexpected attack in the moment of the most solemnly-affianced peace, was still more aggravated by the queen's commanding him to be apprehended, and sent to the Tower, as if he had been the treacherous aggressor. A secret friend warned him of this order, and he departed immediately for his castle at Warwick, with a deep-seated conviction, that his destruction was resolved upon, and that the queen was capable of the most faithless violences to achieve her purpose.⁷⁰ From Warwick, he went to his government at Calais, where he defeated a Spanish fleet of 28 ships, in a naval battle; a greater than had occurred for the last forty years; and he waited with resentful caution, to see the course that his friends would pursue.⁷¹

York and Salisbury felt in this faithless conduct their own danger, and resolved to appeal to the king on the manifest perfidy. The queen, on her side, had been led into the apparent faithlessness, by the mistatement of her friends and her own too eager misconceptions. She was led to believe, that Warwick had contrived the affray, and that his object was to dethrone the king and exalt the duke of York. This idea had now become the popular report, from the dread of one party, and the desire of the other. York had hitherto attempted no usurpation. But as the unpopularity of the government made the event always possible, and the attempt inviting, nothing could dispossess the queen and her friends of the

⁷⁰ Fab. 465. Hall, 239.

⁷¹ Fenn, 158. Whet. 447. And see Rym. Fœd. II. p. 415.

BOOK belief, that it was the resolution of York, and his
III. noble friends, to effect it; and she seems to have
REIGN OF caused its occurrence, by driving her opponents to
HENRY VI. the state of having no alternative between the action
she most feared, and their own certain destruction by
her power.

C H A P. X.

Civil War.—Battle of Bloreheath.—Flight of York and his Friends.—Warwick and Edward invade from Calais.—Battle of Northampton.—Queen's Flight.—York's first Claim to the Crown.—Battle at Wakefield.—York beheaded.—Second Battle of St. Albans.

CONFIDENCE in each other being irrecoverably lost, the appeal to arms for deadly purposes was resolved on. At the end of April, the king summoned his forces to meet him at Leicester, on the 10th of May:¹ and the great nobles, York, Warwick and Salisbury, projected a combined movement to surprise their antagonists. Their plan was to unite at Kenilworth, before the government heard of their advancing: and for this purpose, Warwick issued from Calais, and Salisbury from Middleham. But their councils were betrayed; and Henry was persuaded to move with celerity against Salisbury, while he was marching alone. So rapid was the king's unexpected advance, that Salisbury found himself anticipated; and to escape a force that he could not with prudence encounter, he was driven to make a larger circuit, which brought him suddenly, with his 5000 troops, in collision with a superior force, which lord Audley had collected from Cheshire and Shropshire, at Blore-heath, in Staffordshire, on the 23d of September. The queen and prince Edward had accompanied Audley to Chester, and summoned lord Stanley with

1459.
April—
August.
Civil war
begins.

¹ Fenn, 174 8.

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.Battle of
Blore-
heath,
23 Sept.
1459.

other nobility to join the royal standard. Stanley declared he would lead its van division, but moved so slowly as to keep at a distance of six miles from both the queen and Salisbury; with the same feelings that afterwards actuated him in Bosworth-field.² Audley took his station, and displaying the number of 10,000 men, Salisbury felt that he was circumvented: he saw that stratagem alone could produce victory; and he formed his plans with the hopes and the resolution of proud despair. He placed his camp that night by the side of a small but deep brook, beyond which his antagonists lay. In the morning, his men shot their arrows over the stream on the confronting army, and then pretended to retreat. Audley, eager to obey the queen's orders to bring Salisbury alive or dead before her, began to pass the stream in eager pursuit. When Salisbury's watching eye had ascertained that enough had crossed over to divide his enemies into two separated portions, he suddenly rallied, and attacked that which had crossed. A fierce combat ensued; but the first being discomfited before the other could get into action, it ended in the death and defeat of Audley. Salisbury's two sons were wounded, and as they were journeying homewards, were taken by the queen's friends, but the people rescued them. It is remarked, that the Welsh were generally favorable to the popular noblemen.³

This victory enabled Salisbury to join the duke

² Parl. Rolls, 5. p. 348. On Stanley's conduct, see p. 369, 370. His absence is declared to have been a great cause of the defeat. His brother, sir William, was acting with Salisbury; and he himself wrote to the earl, congratulating him on his victory. Salisbury sent this letter to sir Thomas Harrington, who shewed it openly, saying, 'Sirs! be merry, for we have yet more friends.' Ib. 369. Yet the king would not consent to his impeachment.

³ Hall, 240. Wheth. 456. Fabian, 465.

CHAP.
X.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

of York, who had collected a strong body, and encamped at Ludeford, near Ludlow. There Warwick met them with the best of his old soldiers from Calais, among whom sir Andrew Trollop was one of the most distinguished. The papers they dispersed, explaining their intentions, urged a change of administration, not of the dynasty.⁴

The royal army, which had missed Salisbury, was moved by its skilful directors rapidly to Ludlow, enlarging as it passed. It allowed no impediment to stop it, either from the difficulty of the roads or intemperance of the weather, for thirty days ; resting only on Sundays, and the king himself lodging sometimes in the bare fields. Proclamations preceded them, offering grace to all that would depart, and pardon to York and Warwick, if within six days they should request it.⁵ The three confederated noble-

* A copy of the articles dispersed by Warwick, in the name of his party, on his march, are in the Harl. MSS. 543, p. 164. They are important, as shewing the public grounds taken by the combined lords, as the justification of their treasonable warfare. They state,

1. That the common weal and good politic lawes had been piteously overturned.
2. That the crown property had been outrageously spoiled and robbed.
3. That sufficient was scarcely left for the sustentation of the royal household.
4. That the merchants and people had, by illegal novelties, suffered great extortions, without payment, from the ministers of the king's household.
5. That the government permitted great and abominable murders, robberies, periuries and extortions ; and favored and cherished, instead of punishing them.
6. That the king, from his own blessed conversation, and noble disposition, graciously applied himself to the common weal ; but that certain persons, from their covetise, and that they might rule, had hidden all these evils from him.

They declared, that from the tender they bore to the realm, and proudly to the king's estate, they meant to go into his presence as true subjects ; to shew him these inconveniences ; lowly to beseech him to vouchsafe to redeem his land from this jeopardy ; and, by the advice of the great lords of his blood, to redress it.

* Whethamsted gives the reasons of the confederated lords, why these offers were not accepted : 1. We have had other pardons, but they have

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.York's fail-
ure at Lud-
low, in
October.

men answered by a letter to the king, asserting earnestly their loyalty to him, but complaining of their wrongs, and emphatically soliciting him not to apply his power to their destruction.⁶ This request was disregarded ; and on the 13th of October, the two armies were confronted. To silence the scruples of loyalty that were shaking some, York had recourse to a dangerous fraud, which recoiled on himself, when detected to be false. He caused some persons to swear in front of his army, that Henry had suddenly expired, and ordered the masses for the dead to be sung. The king was roused by his friends to an energy he had never felt before. He exhorted his troops “so knightly, so manly, and so comfortable; with so princely apport and assured manner, that the lords and people took great joy, and only desired to fulfil his courageous desire.”⁷ This vigorous proof of the king’s actual existence and new martial spirit, being communicated to York’s army,

availed us nothing. 2. Because the king had degraded them both to the nobility and the people ; and had neither called them to his council, nor summoned them to parliament. 3. That the king’s relations, with haughtiness and obstinacy, acted as they pleased. 4. That tho the lords ought to have been called to parliament, and have full liberty of going, staying, and departing ; yet, that when Warwick came, he had been so purposely surrounded and pressed on at Westminster, that he would have been infallibly suffocated, if an unexpected aid had not rescued him. p. 457.

“ We beseech your good grace to receive our said truth and intent ; and not apply your said blessedness, ne the great righteousness and equity wherewith God hath ever endued your high nobility, to the importune, impatience, and violence of such persons as intend of extreme malice to proceed, under shadow of your high might and presence, to our destruction, for such inordinate covetise as they have to our lands, offices, and goods.’ They declared, that they would not use their defence ‘ until the time that we shall be provoked of necessity.’ They mentioned, that they had sent him an indenture of their truth and loyalty by Dr. W. Lindwoode, who had taken, upon the sacrament, their oaths of truth and duty to him. Stowe’s Chron. 405, 6. This solemn declaration of their loyalty, up to that time, is dated at Ludlow, 10 Oct. Ib.

⁷ These are the words of the Parliamentary Record, p. 348.

CHAP.
X.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

revealed his deceitful falsehood. The waters being out, it was evening before the royal forces could take a suitable station. York, skirmishing as he advanced, fortified his chosen ground, placed his cannon in front of his position, laid his ambuses, and prepared by an early morning attack to anticipate his opponents. But Trollop, in whom Warwick had principally confided, suddenly departed secretly in the night, and joined, with the chief soldiers from Calais, the royal banner. This desertion, the dismay it created, the instability of spirit that followed it in some, and the uncertainty how many would imitate the treachery, unnerved the courage of the rest: and York, at midnight, found it necessary to order a retreat, as failure was treason. A general dispersion followed. York fled thro Wales, with his youngest son, to Ireland. His eldest, Edward lord March, now almost eighteen years old, retired with Salisbury and Warwick into Devonshire. Lord Grey and others went to the king's tent, and sued for pardon.⁸

The king's army, astonished at their easy triumph, plundered the duke's castle and town of Ludlow, and sent the duchess and her two youngest sons, one of whom was afterwards Richard III. then seven years old, to be kept in custody by her sister, the duchess of Buckingham.⁹ A parliament was assembled at Coventry, on the 20th of November. The fugitive nobles were proclaimed traitors, and their estates confiscated.¹⁰ Lord Stanley was spared, and the countess of Salisbury was charged with having counselled and abetted all the treason.¹¹ It

⁸ Parl. Rolls, 348, 9. Feb. 466. Wheth. 459. 1 Fenn, 181. Hall, 241, 2.⁹ Hearne's Fragment, 284. Feb. 466.¹⁰ Parl. Rolls, 370. W. Wyr. 478.¹¹ Parl. Rolls, 349. She, on 1 August, at Middleham, and sir William

BOOK III. was afterwards alleged, that this parliament was unduly summoned ; that a great part of the county members and burgesses, had been named by the crown and returned, some without due election, and others without any election at all.¹³ But the queen's party had now unopposed sway. The command of the north was given to the earl of Northumberland and lord Clifford ; and Somerset, as his father had been, was already appointed to take the captainship of Calais.¹⁴ The house of York seemed abased for ever.

But Warwick, Salisbury, and the young Edward, by the aid of a gentleman, John Denham, who became lord high treasurer to Henry VII. procured a ship at Exeter, which conveyed them to Guernsey. They rested secretly here till the 2d of November, and then sailed privately to Calais, where they were admitted by lord Fauconbridge, thro a postern gate. Once safely within the walls, they met a joyful reception from its troops and people.¹⁴

1460. From such persons it was not easy for the duke of January. Somerset to take Calais. He repeatedly attacked it, Expeditions but a vigorous artillery repulsed him. To co-operate from with him, lord Rivers, the father of that lady who Calais. became afterwards the wife of the young Edward, against whom he was now acting ; and lord Scales, a veteran soldier, collected a navy at Sandwich. But Denham was dispatched from Calais, at the end of

Oldham and others, in London. Parl. Rolls. This parliament was dissolved 21 Dec. 1459. p. 370. The king had been at Coventry from 20 May to 26 June. 11 Rym. 453-5.

¹³ Parl. Rolls, 374. Letters from the privy seal were sent to divers sheriffs of the preceding year, to proceed to the elections : and an act was passed, declaring their returns to be valid, and indemnifying them against the penalties for acting so illegally. Ib. 367.

¹⁴ On Oct. 9. 11 Rym. 436. ¹¹ Fab. 466, 7. Whet. 474-6.

January, to surprise these succors; and executed his task so ably, that he took Rivers in his bed, and, with his son and the shipping, returned triumphant to his friends.¹⁵ Rivers was brought before the Yorkist lords, amid the light of 160 torches; and it is a curious instance of the human ignorance of futurity, that they assailed the father of their next queen, and whose marriage ultimately occasioned their destruction, with the most bitter reproaches. Salisbury called him, "knave's son;" and Warwick taunted him, with his father's being a squire, and himself only made of consequence by marriage; and that it was not his part to talk of lords as he had done. Edward also, unconscious of the then unknown Elizabeth, that was to win his fondest affection, "rated him in like wise."¹⁶

York was received in Ireland with an enthusiasm which consoled his depression, and gave tokens of a brighter day.¹⁷ The spring of 1460 evinced to both sides, that temporary victory was not permanent success. The popular feeling in England was discovered to be in favor of the noblemen in exile, and it was rumored, that they would soon be in it.¹⁸ A naval force was again stationed at Sandwich, to assist Somerset to assault Calais, but was again discomfited.¹⁹ Another succor under lord Audley was driven into Calais, by a tempest, and secured.²⁰ The

¹⁵ Whet. 476. Fab. 467. The king's letter, mentioning this event, is dated 10 Feb. 1460. 11 Rym. Fœd. 440. But W. Paston's letter of 29 Jan. notices it. 1 Fenn, 187.

¹⁶ We owe this interesting scene to W. Paston. 1 Fenn, 189. Denham received a wound in this enterprise, which made him lame ever afterwards. Fab. 478.

¹⁷ Whethamsted says, they hailed him like another Messiah. p. 474.

¹⁸ The king's letters, of 22 February and 17 March, to his friends, so announced. 11 Rym. 444-7.

¹⁹ Whet. 477. W. Wyr. 479. Fab. 478.

²⁰ Whet. 477.

BOOK III. king, in coming to London, excited the people to join him as he advanced; and sent commissioners into several counties, ordering every man to be in his best array, ready to march when the orders should be sent.²¹

REIGN OF HENRY VI.
Warwick consults with York, in Dublin.

The ministry perceiving that the dangerous attack must cross the channel, a strong fleet under the duke of Exeter was sent to guard it.²² Warwick ventured to cross it from Calais, to concert with York at Dublin the plan of their intended invasion. This voyage was a daring experiment on the fidelity of the English seamen. He returned with his mother, the proscribed countess of Salisbury, and met the fleet of Exeter, about Whitsuntide, off Cornwall. His capture was certain, if the royal fleet had done its duty. But he was popular in the navy, and no one would act against him. To the vexation of Exeter, he passed thro his ships unmolested, and returned to Calais in safety.²³

The victories at Sandwich had given the command of the Kentish promontory to the revolted lords, and they ascertained the disposition of the Kentish men to be with them, provided they attempted nothing against the king's person.²⁴ It was, therefore, resolved to land at this point, while York entered in the north from Ireland. After addressing, to the archbishop of Canterbury and commons of England, a statement of their complaints,²⁵ at the end of May they left the French shore; and on the 5th of June,²⁶ were on the

Warwick lands in Kent, 5th June.

²¹ 1 Fenn, 189. The duke of Buckingham was rewarded for 'his attention to us in our journey, against the rebels in Kent.' 11 Rym. 443.

²² 11 Rym. 449. The order for its provisions is dated 30 March.

²³ W. Wyr. 479. Fab. 478.

²⁴ Whet. 478.

²⁵ See these at length in Stowe's Chron. p. 407. The charge of duke Humphrey's murder is one of their allegations. Ib.

²⁶ The order in Rymer, 11. p. 454, gives this date.

English soil, but accompanied only by 1500 men; with these, from Sandwich, they marched direct to Canterbury, and after a brief pause, they moved immediately to London. So popular was their cause, and so acceptable their declarations, that before they reached the metropolis, 40,000 men in arms had joined them.²⁷

CHAP.
X.
REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

This welcomed reception makes it important to consider what were the political questions, connected with these lords' resistance to the government, which so deeply affected the public sensibility. We have a document remaining, which fully acquaints us with the motives which actuated, on this occasion, our insurrectionary ancestors. It is, the articles published by the men of Kent, when they assembled to greet and join the rebellious nobility. They shew, that it was the system of administration which had excited the public aversion, and was producing the civil war. There was no disloyalty to their good king Henry, nor any personal attachment to the house of York, independent of the redress of grievances that became connected with his name. The line of York was not dearer to the nation than that of Lancaster; but because the latter supported the abuses which were felt to exist, and resisted the improvements that were desired; and because their measures to maintain the evils they espoused, endangered public liberty, and intruded on private property and comfort, the nation clung to the house of York, as its political deliverer; and identified the white rose with freedom of religious opinions, reformation of grievances, and preservation from arbitrary power.²⁸

²⁷ Whet. 479. Lord Cobham was among these.

²⁸ These articles of the Kentish men are preserved in the Harleian

BOOK
III.

As they approached the metropolis, lord Scales attempted to defend it; but the mayor and citizens,

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

MSS. No 543. The following is their substance. I have not seen them noticed before:—

‘ These be the points and causes of the gathering and assembling of us, the king’s true liegemen of Kent, the which we trust to remedy, with help of him the king, our sovereign lord, and all the commonons of England:’

‘ 1. The king, by the insatiable covetousness, malicious purpose, and false-brought-up-of-nought persons, daily and nightly about his highness, is daily informed that good is evil, and evil is good.

‘ 2. They say, that our sovereign lord is above law, and that the law was made but to his pleasure; and that he may make and break it as often as him list, without any distinction. The contrary is true. And also, that he should not have been sworn, in his coronation, to keep it, which we conceive for the highest point of treason that any subject may do against his prince, to make him reign in perjury.

‘ 3. They say, how that the king should live upon his commons, so that all their bodies and goods been his. The contrary is true; for then he need never to set parliament to assess any goods of them.

‘ 4. Item, they inform the king, how that the commons would first destroy the king’s friends, and after himself, and then bring in the duke of York to be their king; so that, by these false means and lesyngs, they made him to hate and to destroy his very friends, and love his false traitors, that call themselves his friends.

‘ 5. They say, it is a great reproach to the king to reassume what he has given away for livelihood.

‘ 6. The false traitors will suffer no man to come into the king’s presence, for no cause, without he will give a bribe.

‘ 7. That the good duke of Gloucester was impeached of treason by one false traitor alone. How soon was he murdered! and never might come to his answer. And that false traitor Poole, impeached by all the commonalty of England, (the which number passed a quest of 24,000) might not be suffered to die as the law would: but rather these said traitors, at the said Poole’s assent, that was as fals as *Fortiger*, would that the king should hold battayle in his own realm, in the destruction of all his people, and of himself, both.

‘ 8. They, whom the king will, shall be traitors, and whom he will not, shall be none.

‘ 9. The law seemth only to do wrong.

‘ 10. That our sovereign lord may well understand that he hath had false counsel: *for his law is lost; his merchandize is lost; his commons bene destroyed; the sea is lost; France is lost; himself is made so poor, so that he may not pay for his meat ne drink; he oweth more, and is greater in debt, than ever was king in England.* This notwithstanding, yet daily these said traitors that bene about him, awaite where any thing should fall, and come to him, and profit by his law, they bene ready enow to ask it from him.

‘ 11. They ask gentlemen’s lands and goods in Kent, and call up risers and traitors, and the king’s enemies; but we shall be found his true liegemen.

‘ 12. WE WILL that all men know, that we neither robbe nor stele;

from their sympathy with the insurrectionists, declining to assist him, EDWARD, the eldest son of York, and their future sovereign, entered the city on the 2d of July, accompanied by Warwick and Salisbury.²⁸ The pope's legate had ridden with them thro Kent,²⁹ and the archbishop of Canterbury attended them to London, with his cross borne in state before him.³⁰ A convocation of the clergy assembled at St. Paul's church. The invading nobles recited the causes of their enterprize, and the mis-government of the land, and swore that they had ever borne true allegiance to Henry, and intended nothing against him.³¹ Thus, what they had done, received the sanction of the heads of the church; and a general determination was manifested to separate Henry from those who were misconducting the government. His deposition was not at this time projected. A new system of government would have satisfied the country. With this spirit, they determined promptly on their future measures. York had not yet reached them from Ireland, but his son Edward, of military talents superior to his father, was with them: and while Salisbury and Cobham, were left to watch lord Scales, in the tower, Edward, with Warwick, Fauconbridge, and Bourchier, and attended by the archbishop of Canterbury, and four

CHAP.
X.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

but the defaults amended, we will go home. Wherefore we exhort all the king's true liegers to help and support us.

' 13. *We blame not all the lords about the king's person, nor all gentlemen, nor all men of law, nor all bishops, nor all priests; but only such as may be found guilty, by a just and a true inquiry by the law.'* The papers end:—

' God be our guide,
And then we shall spedie,
Whoever says, nay.'

²⁸ Fabian, 469. ²⁹ W. Wyr. 480. ³⁰ Stowe's Chron. 408.

³¹ Stowe's Chron. 408. W. Wyr. 480. Whethamsted mentions the interposition of the spiritual lords, 479.

BOOK III. REIGN OF HENRY VI. bishops,²² advanced immediately on Coventry, then nicknamed “the queen’s secret arbor.”²³ A stream of popularity seems to have followed them.²⁴ The king’s friends were alert, and Somerset, Buckingham, and other great lords, collected their forces around him at Northampton.²⁵

The prelates who accompanied the popular nobles, sent the bishop of Salisbury to the king, to conjure him to prevent the effusion of blood, by a treaty of peace. But he returned answers of displeasure, mistrust, and contempt; for tho Henry was pacifically disposed, the nobles on his side so relied on their own military skill, and the strength of their camp, that their inferiority in numbers did not shake their resolution to abide the event of a battle. Hence they sent back abuse and insulting defiance.²⁶

Battle of North-anpton, 10 July.

The queen met the crisis with spirit and activity. She warmly harangued her army, and promised liberal rewards to all who should distinguish themselves. She had passed the Nene, and it was in the new field between Harryngton and Sandiford, that her captains had strongly fortified themselves with high banks and deep trenches.²⁷ The nobles surveying the entrenchment, resolved to attack it in three distinct bodies. The first was given to young Edward; the second to Warwick, and Fauconbridge led the

²² W. Wyr. 481. Stowe, 408.

²³ Hall, 244.

²⁴ Whethamstede mentions them to have been followed by an immense multitude; above 160,000. p. 479.

²⁵ The king was at Northampton on 7 July. 11 Rym. 457.

²⁶ Whet. 479, 480.

²⁷ Hall. The earl of Warwick sent bishops to be admitted to the king, to confer with him on the exigency. They being refused admittance, a herald was next commissioned. He being also prevented from access, a third messenger was sent, to declare, that before two hours after noon, the earl would either speak with Henry, or die in the field. Stowe’s Chron. 409.

third. On the 10th of July 1460, in separate but simultaneous movements, they attacked the ditch of circumvallation full of stakes, hedge-shrubs and small trees. The height and slope of the inward rampart for a while baffled their attempts to ascend it. But lord Grey de Ruthyn, at his post, insidiously assisted them. His soldiers extending their hands, helped up the assailants into the royal camp.²⁸ Warwick entered it about seven in the morning. Edward eagerly followed with his father's banner. The cavalry dismounting, fought on foot, and a desperate tho' short conflict of two hours, ended in the total discomfiture of the king's army. Buckingham, Talbot the son of the celebrated earl, lords Egremont and Beaumont, and many gentlemen, perished. The defeated were driven on the stream, and as an unusual flood from rain had made it wide and deep, many were drowned.²⁹ Somerset narrowly escaped. The queen and her son were nearly taken in their flight by a retainer of lord Stanley, about Chester; and she was robbed of all her jewels and property by her own servants; but she got safe into Wales, with the prince, then but seven years old, and from Wales she fled into Scotland.³⁰

Edward and Warwick proceeded to the king's tent, and found him sitting alone and abandoned, lamenting the general madness that was raging round him. They bent before him to the ground, and consoling him with reverential words, and soothing assurances, led him with every circumstance of

CHAP.
X.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

²⁸ Whet. 480, 1. W. Wyr. 481.

²⁹ Whet. 481. Fab. 469. Stowe mentions, that the rain was so heavy on that day, that the king's cannon could not be fired. 469.

³⁰ W. Wyr. 481, 2. 'She was robbed by the way in Lancashire, of all her goods, to the value of ten thousand marks.' Stowe's Chron. 409.

BOOK III. honor into the town. In the morning, after returning thanks to heaven for their victory, they put him on a horse, and marched back to London, where he was solemnly and affectionately received by all classes of the people; and the successful nobles treated him with every decorum, honor, and reverence.⁴¹ Lord Scales delivered up the Tower, and was entering a small boat to escape to the queen, when some watermen, part of Warwick's retainers, saw him, and inhumanly murdered him with their darts and daggers.⁴² The bishop of Exeter, Warwick's brother, was made chancellor, and lord Bourchier, treasurer.⁴³

The duke of York was sent for from Ireland.⁴⁴ His duchess came to London in the middle of September, but on his landing near Chester about that time, she went to Hereford to join him, leaving her children in the capital.⁴⁵ The duke reached London on the 10th of October.⁴⁶

Thus far the insurrectionary nobles had disclaimed any idea of deposing Henry, or of changing the dynasty. Respect to the reigning sovereign had been combined with all their movements and successes. But now their councils altered, and a revolution as to the throne was determined upon. York's arrival in London had been delayed three months from the victory at Northampton, probably

⁴¹ Whet. 481, 2. The king reached London the 16th of July, and was lodged in the bishop's palace. Stowe's Chron. 409.

⁴² 'I saw him,' says W. Wycrestre, 'lying naked near the church-porch, in the burying ground of St. Mary Overy, Southwark. He had been stripped of his clothes, but was buried honorably the same day, by Edward and Warwick.' p. 482. ⁴³ W. Wyr. 481 ⁴⁴ Fab. 469.

⁴⁵ I Fenn, 199. He landed about the 8th of September, and went to his castle at Ludlow. W. Wyr. 483.

⁴⁶ Fab. 469. As he came, he had commissions to sit in judgment in various towns, to inflict severities on the king's friends. Ludlow, Shrewsbury, Hereford, Leicester and Coventry, are named. I Fenn, 201.

to give time to settle this momentous point. Their reasons for the mutation have not been transmitted to us: but they are sufficiently inferrible. If Henry had been unmarried, or had been wedded to a queen of peaceful and domestic temper, he would not have been dethroned. His gentle and unambitious spirit would have endangered no one. He forgot and forgave every offence and insult; and disliking all conflicts of violence, he would have allowed the resisting nobles to have conducted the government as they wished. But Margaret had made herself the queen of a political party, and had imbibed feelings of implacable antipathy to her opponents. The king and his wife could not be kept long apart; and her return, from his yielding disposition, would have been followed by the destruction of those who had defeated her, and by a revival of all those plans and measures of government, which had been so odious to the liberalizing spirit of the nation. Hence a new king was represented as indispensable to the personal safety of all who had been in arms against the crown, and for the reformation of those abuses which had been so loudly censured: and York came to the metropolis to accomplish this revolution.

The parliament assembled in October, in the painted chamber. On the 16th of that month the duke of York entered Westminster, in great state, with a numerous armed retinue, sounding their horns and trumpets; and entering the palace, he proceeded to the house of lords. He passed thro it to the throne, and placing his hand on the cushion, kept it there a short time, like a man meditating to take possession of his right; then withdrawing it, he turned to the peers; and standing under the royal canopy, he bowed while

York
claims the
crown,
16th Oct.

BOOK III. they applauded. The archbishop of Canterbury advanced, and asked him to go and see the king, who was then in the queen's palace. The duke haughtily answered, that he knew one in the kingdom, who ought rather to come to him.⁴⁷ Ambitious pride had now become his dominant passion, and judgment, and duty, and eventually his life, were sacrificed to its gratification. For the first time, he publicly stated his title and made his claim to the crown, and delivered it in writing to the chancellor.⁴⁸ When the duke of York's council on the next day prayed an answer, the lords thought that no subject could enter into any communication upon it, without the king's commandment and assent. They went to his majesty, and he desired them to search to find all the objections that could be made to the duke's title. They asked him if he had discovered any reasonable ones. He told them, that he had seen and understood many writings and chronicles. The great question was the next day referred to the justices, but after two days deliberation, they stated, that as it touched the king's high estate and regality, it passed their learning, and they durst not decide upon it. The king's serjeant and attorney-general were ordered to argue on Henry's behalf: and they rested his cause on the former oath of allegiance of all the peers, on the act of parliament, and its entails, settling the crown in the house of Lancaster; on York's not having borne Lionel's arms; and on Henry the fourth's right as a

⁴⁷ Whethamsted gives us these particulars, 484; and adds, that all ranks began to murmur at his behaviour.

⁴⁸ Parl. Rec. 374, 5. He claimed, as the lineal heir of Lionel, the third son of Edward III., and therefore as having a right before any issue of that king's fourth son, John of Gaunt, from whom the house of Lancaster was descended.

conqueror.⁵⁰ This was conceding York's lineal title, which they could not dispute. His reply was heard:⁵¹ and the lords then decided that Henry should keep the crown for life, but that York and his family should succeed him. A new act of settlement to this effect was passed. The royal assent was given to it, and the opposing statutes were repealed.⁵² Thus a new parliamentary right was added to the lineal title of the house of York. The king went to Eltham and Greenwich to hunt and sport, while his queen and son were with Exeter, seeking shelter in Wales.⁵³ This modified arrangement of the succession, was the suggestion of the most dispassioned and moderate part of the nobility, who sought to unite the preservation of their own honor and allegiance to Henry, with the personal and national advantages expected from a new dynasty. York and his two eldest sons swore to do nothing to abridge the king's life, or to diminish his dignity or liberty: and to imagine York's death, was enacted to be high treason.⁵⁴ On the 31st of October, these points were finally adjusted.

CHAP.
X.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.
His suc-
cession
enacted.⁵⁰ Parl. Rolls, 374-9.

⁵¹ This was, that what was right was obligatory on every man: that no oath could discharge him from it; nor was any oath binding to the prejudice of another; and that no man is bound by his oath of allegiance to do an unlawful thing. The duke offered to refer this question to any competent spiritual judge. That as to the acts and entails alluded to, Henry IV. could not have needed these enactments, if he had any title of inheritance; and that they were of no force against a right inheritor of the crown, both by divine law, and by all natural laws. That he had abstained from bearing the Lionel arms, as he had abstained pursuing his right, for causes not unknown to the realm; but, tho' right for a time rest and be put to silence, yet that it rots not, and shall not perish. The pretence of Henry IV. to be the true heir of Henry III., he asserted to be a mere saying, to color his *unrighteous* and *violent usurpation*. Parl. Rolls, 377.

⁵² Parl. Rolls, 378, 9. An income of 10,000*l.* a year was assigned to the duke of York. p. 380.

⁵³ 1 Fens, 201. The writer places Somerset at Dieppe, with sir A. Trollope, and others, under the king of France's safe conduct. Ib.

⁵⁴ Parl. Rolls, 379.

BOOK
III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

The king, York, and several lords, afterwards rode in great pomp to St. Paul's to the even service, to return thanks for this peaceable settlement; and on the 9th of November, the duke was solemnly proclaimed heir apparent, and also lord protector, during the king's life.⁵⁴ Till the arrangement was concluded, he declined to visit Henry, affirming, that he was subject to no man, and that the Deity only was his superior.⁵⁵

York persuaded Henry to send for his queen and son; but she, disdaining the arrangement which de-throned her child, went to join her friends, who, by using the king's name in the north, had assembled another army. The earl of Northumberland and lord Clifford met at York, with their force; to which city, the duke of Somerset, and earl of Devon, advanced with their friends from the western counties.⁵⁶ The duke of York, leaving Warwick and Norfolk with the king, went himself with his son Rutland, and Salisbury, towards the north, directing his eldest son Edward to follow him, with the rest of his army. On the 21st of December, York reached his castle at Sendal, with 6,000 men, and spent his Christmas there, while Somerset and his enemies lay at Pomeroy, and Edward was as far off as Shrewsbury. The most judicious men seem on some critical occasions, actuated by an impulse or presumption so unreasonable, as to resemble a fatality. The duke exhibited this impression. Somerset, aware of his small army, advanced with 18,000 to besiege him. Sir David Hall, his old and faithful knight, advised

⁵⁴ Fab. 470, 1. The falling of the crown, that hung on a chandelier in the house of lords, at this time, impressed the populace with a feeling that it prognosticated a change of dynasty. Hall, 248.

⁵⁵ Fab. 469. Hall, 248.

⁵⁶ W. Wyr. 484.

him to stay within his castle, and defend it till his son Edward arrived with the forces he was collecting. The duke, jealous of his own fame, perhaps of his son's rising reputation as a soldier, or urged by that mysterious influence which, tho' frequently occurring, no physical reasoning can explain, replied with great anger,—“Hast thou loved me so long, Davy! and wouldest thou now have me dishonored? Thou never sawest me keep fortress when I was regent in Normandy. But like a man, I issued forth and fought mine enemies, ever to their loss, and to my own honor. I will fight them, tho' I fight alone.”⁵⁷ Salisbury seeing his determination, and venerating its principle, felt that without an impeachment of his own courage, he could not refuse to act as he did: York took his station near the city of Wakefield, and fixing his tents, challenged the queen's army to appoint a day for the combat. It was not unusual in those chivalric times to give and to accept such a defiance, and the arrangement was then solemnly abided by. But in civil war, honor, as well as law and morality, is forgotten. The queen's friends fixed the day of battle; but observing that the duke's army was, in the meantime, remiss in its discipline, and that part frequently wandered about to forage, and that there was a general carelessness of guard, determined, in violation of their own compact, to attempt a surprise before the day named for the combat.⁵⁸

1460.
30 Dec.
Battle of
Wakefield.

Somerset moved the royal army in three divisions; reserving the main battle for himself, he detached

⁵⁷ Grafton, 648. Hall, 250. Fab. 471.

⁵⁸ Whet. 489. W. Wyrcstre mentions, that part of York's forces were out foraging. 485.

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

lord Clifford with a body to act separately on the left, and the earl of Wilts, with another on the right. York, instead of retreating into the castle, with courageous infatuation, hastily arranging the forces he had with him, advanced against the great central mass under Somerset, and was immediately out-flanked and surrounded by Clifford and Wiltshire. A desperate but unequal conflict ensued, that under such arrangements could have but one termination. Every personal motive made it deadly. Both sides were fighting for life, and for all that made life valuable to them,—honor, fame, power, property and comfort. But, surrounded by a trebly superior force, directed by competent skill, with equal bravery, knightly valor could not long avail.⁵⁹ In half an hour, the duke of York, whose foot had been almost on the throne, was with Salisbury, in their hands a prisoner, and 2800 of his followers were slain—victims to his pride of untainted valor. The priest, who was the tutor to his second son Rutland, led the interesting youth, not twelve years old, out of the bloody field towards the town. Clifford saw his rich dress, followed, overtook him on the bridge, and demanded what he was; the boy, speechless from alarm, fell on his knees, and held up his hands, and raised up his imploring eyes. “Save him,” said the chaplain; “he is the son of a prince, and may do you good hereafter.” “The son of York!” shouted the vindictive lord, remembering his own loss at the battle of St. Albans. “Thy father slew mine, and so will I thee and all thy kin;” and to the destruction of his own character, buried his dagger in the youth’s heart!⁶⁰ York himself was taken to a little ant-hill, and placed

⁵⁹ Grafton, 649. Hall, 250.⁶⁰ Grafton, 649. Hall, 251.

in mockery on that as upon a throne : a crown was hastily twisted of grass, and forced on his head ; and bowing their knees to him, in deriding homage, they cried out, “ Hail ! king, without a kingdom ! Hail ! prince, without a people ! ” And then struck off his head.⁴¹ Clifford presented this on a pole to the queen. “ Madam, your war is done ; here is the ransom of your king.” Such a scene was a satire on their inhumanity and folly. It was received with a laughter at which sensibility must have shuddered ; and it roused a public indignation that destroyed all the advantages of their success. The queen sent Salisbury and other valuable prisoners to Pomfret, to be beheaded ; and their heads were placed on the gates of York.⁴²

CHAP.
X.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.
—
York
killed.

1461.
2 Feb.
Battle of
Mortimer's
Cross.

Edward, on this disaster, having, from earl of March, become the duke of York, found none of his father's friends discouraged by his fate. A large army of Welsh borderers, fond of a prince of the race of their own Mortimer, crowded around him ; and when Jasper, earl of Pembroke, with Owen Tudor his father, and the earl of Wilts, advanced with a mixed force of Welsh and Irish to surprise him, the young prince, with a greatly superior force, overpowered and defeated them, with the loss of 3800 men. The two earls fled and escaped ; but Owen Tudor, the husband of queen Catherine, and whose grandson was afterwards raised to the English throne, under the title of Henry VII. was taken and beheaded at Hereford.⁴³

⁴¹ Whet. 489.

⁴² Grafton, 649. Hall, 251. W. Wyr. 458. Whet. 495. Hearne's Frag. 284. Parl. Rolls, 5, p. 466. Fab. 471. York's two younger sons, one of them the future Richard III, now eight years old, were sent to Utrecht. Hearne's Frag. 284. Fab. 472.

⁴³ Grafton, 650, and Hall, 252, mention the project of surprise ; but

BOOK

III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

While these incidents occurred in Wales, the queen, eager to pursue her victory, marched up to London, to regain possession of both the king and kingdom. The dukes of Exeter and Somerset, the earls of Northampton, Devon, and Shrewsbury, with some lords, and 24,000 soldiers, accompanied her. Success at first attended her martial movements.

17 Feb. The earl of Warwick and the duke of Norfolk marched out of London with the king, as the legal chieftain of their army, to meet her. To wait for an adequate force seems to have been a policy that was incompatible with the high-spirited pride of the renowned fighters of the day. Warwick took his station at St. Albans. York's former victory there may have occasioned him to select this town as the place of battle. The queen's forces attacked. But the archers near the great cross repulsed them. They rallied, and penetrated by an alley into St. Peter's-street; and there a serious conflict began, which was succeeded by a fiercer battle on the heath, at the north end of the city, between part of the two armies. Warwick, with all the personal bravery of the soldier, was not equally possessed of the skill of the general. The abbot of the town declares, that if his troops had pressed fiercely on the queen's adherents, with persevering attacks, they would have infallibly succeeded. Five thousand only of his forces maintained the struggle in this direction, and instead of the rest of his army being moved to their support, they were allowed to be broken and to be pursued; when the other divisions, tho' still 20,000 men, dispersed

Wyrcestre states the number of Edward at 51,000, and of his opponent at 8000. p. 486. If so, this is another of those rash battles which took place in this war.

CHAP.
X.REIGN OF
HENRY VI.

also into flight. The king's manifest indifference or dislike to the party he was with, contributed to the result: for the nobles in the army seeing that he displayed no spirit or mind, or animating gestures, or discourse, but inclined only to his wife and her friends, withdrew in vexation and disgust; and Henry, as in a former battle, was found standing alone, without lords, knights, standard bearer, armor bearers, or any of the men at arms, who had been placed at his side, for the safeguard of his person. He was taken to lord Clifford's tent as the nearest, and the queen and prince were brought to him. He received them with great joy, embraced them, kissed them eagerly, gave thanks to heaven, and knighted his son, then a boy about seven years of age. The abbot humbly begged he would save the town from being plundered: but the boisterous northern soldiers declared, that they had been promised the plunder of all places beyond the Trent as their reward, and they claimed and exercised unsparingly the granted right of promiscuous pillage.⁴⁴

This partly vindictive and partly political promise and permission, operated only to exasperate the country, and to make her victory a barren laurel. Her army had signalized itself by depredation from York to St. Albans. Whatever they could carry or destroy, was seized and spoiled. No monasteries or churches were spared. They took away what was transportable, and devastated what they were obliged to leave:⁴⁵ and a general dread and aversion at their

⁴⁴ Whet. 497-504. The most distinguished person who fell in this battle, on the queen's side, was sir John Grey, whose widow, Elizabeth, became the queen of Edward IV.

⁴⁵ Ib. 495. 504.

BOOK
III.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.
Edward arrives in London.

conduct, excited a wish for their discomfiture and a depreciation of their further successes.

At this critical juncture Edward appeared in London eight days after the battle of St. Albans. He was received with a transport of joy, tho scarcely nineteen : and a profound and perplexing consultation began, what measures were the most expedient now to be adopted. Most of the gentry from the south and east of England, flocked into London to welcome him.[“] He counselled and communicated daily with the prelates and lords in the metropolis, and with other solid and sensible men.[“] The great question to be now decided was, did the national welfare as well as their own, make an alteration of the dynasty inevitable ; or could Henry's reign be prolonged without sacrificing the general good. The queen had not only drawn the revengeful sword, but had thrown away the scabbard ; and the late events had shewn, that Henry was unchangeably identified with her. The blood that had been shed, made compromise both impossible and undesired. Neither party would now forgive the other. One must triumph and the other fall. The day of moderation had passed, and that of extremes had come on. In such a state of things the triumphant party would of course determine in favor of the alternative that most suited its interests ; and in conformity with the opinions and wishes of the first men of the country then in London, the populace assembled in the fields beyond Clerkenwell. The chancellor explained Edward's claim. Lord Falconbridge expatiated on Henry's misgovernment ; and all the people, with loud acclamations,

[“] Fab. 472.

[“] Whet. 511, 12. W. Wyr. 488.

proclaimed Edward to be their king.⁶⁸ The lords and commons, in a hasty meeting, at Barnard's castle, confirmed the election. Edward hesitated awhile in accepting the throne ; he had sworn not to disturb Henry during his life. The chances of war had exceedingly fluctuated. The queen had yet an unbroken army, that had been twice victorious. But there was no safety now to himself or to his supporters in refusing it, and the populace were cordially with him. Youth and ambition yielded to the splendid temptation. On the 4th of March 1461, he went as king to St. Paul's,⁶⁹ and thence to Westminster to the royal throne, in the house of lords, and declared, to all that assembled, his genealogy and title. He sat awhile with the sceptre, and then proceeded under a canopy to the abbey, and putting on the crown, and holding the sceptre of the confessor at the great altar, he again explained his title, and received the homage and fealty of the nobility, while the people shouted their salutations. Getting afterwards into his boat, he was rowed to London ; and the next day was proclaimed king thro the city, by the title of Edward IV.⁷⁰

CHAP.
X.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.
Edward
made king,
4 March.

In the meantime, when Henry, on rejoining his son, had dubbed him the same evening a knight, with thirty other youths, who had partaken of the honor of the day, it was for the queen and her advisers to decide, whether she ought not to march immediately to London. In war, the spirit of adventure is much oftener wisdom than hesitating caution. The knowlege, that the citizens were against her, and if made desperate, were numerous enough to endanger her; the certainty, from experience, that her troops, if

⁶⁸ ‘I was there,’ says W. Wyrcestre. ‘I heard them, and I returned with them into the city.’ p. 489. ⁶⁹ W. Wyr. Hall.

⁷⁰ Whet. 512-14. W. Wyr. 489. Hearne’s Frag. 286. Hall, 254.

BOOK III. marched to the metropolis, would expect the plunder of the city, a measure perilous from its consequences to her future government ; a perception how much their unbridled violences had already injured her;⁷¹ and perhaps a humane reluctance to so dreadful a calamity, suspended her progress, and contenting herself with demanding supplies from the metropolis, she paused at Dunstable. The populace stopped the carts at Cripplegate that were destined for her, and repulsed there some of her cavalry which came to plunder. To allay her irritation at this opposition, the duchesses of Bedford and Buckingham, with lady Scales, accompanied the recorder to Barnet, as an embassy, soliciting pardon and peace : and the queen and her council appointed some lords, with a detachment, to reconnoitre the city.⁷²

Queen retires to the north.

This hesitation was fatal to her interest. If she had marched straight from her victory to the metropolis, the sudden dismay might have placed it in her hands. By pausing, she gave time for the success of Edward at Mortimer's Cross, to become known both to his own friends and to the citizens, and for his arrival in the capital ; and the impression of her own successes immediately diminished. The report, that he had met the defeated Warwick at Chipping Norton, and was advancing on London, completed her

⁷¹ To the authorities on this point already cited, we may add, Hist. Croyl. 531 ; the speaker's speech to parliament, Parl. Rolls, 5, p. 462 ; and the act of attainder, p. 476. The letter from a friend of the Warwick family, in 1 Fenn, 207, dated January 1461, implies both the fact and the effect. ' In this country, every man is well willing to go with my lords here ; and I hope God shall help them. For the people in the north rob and steal, and be appointed to pillage all this country, and give away men's goods and livelihoods in the south country. My lords have much to do to keep down all this country, more than four or five shires ; for they would be for upon the men in the north : for it is for the weak of the south.' ⁷² W. Wyr. 487. Fab. 471. Hall, 252.

alarm. London she saw was hostile. Kent she knew was so, and Essex she could not trust. She saw no safety but in the north; and in an evil hour for herself, she withdrew towards it, accompanying her retreat with an act of severity, that could but increase the enmity against her,⁷³ and the dread of her success.⁷⁴ She never had any reasonable prospect of the throne again.

CHAP.

X.

REIGN OF
HENRY VI.⁷³ W. Wyr. 487, 8. Hall, 253.⁷⁴ Against Henry's wishes, she had lord Bonville and sir Thomas Tyrrel beheaded. Hall, 253.

⁷⁵ The transactions between England and Scotland, after the release of James I. from his captivity, in 1423, who had married the first earl of Somerset's daughter, were not of great importance during the reign of Henry VI. A truce of seven years was made in 1424, and renewed for five years, from 1431. In 1437, James was murdered. His son James II. acceded at the age of six years; and a truce was made with England in 1438; for nine years. Mutual border incursions violated this pacification, for a short time, in 1449; but in that year, the truce was renewed for an unlimited period, which was afterwards made definite to 1457, and again prolonged to 1468. In 1460, James II. was killed at the siege of Roxburgh, and was succeeded by his son James III. who reigned till 1468. Henry's Hist. Eng. v. 9, and Pinkerton's Hist. Scotl. v. 1.

BOOK IV.

REIGN OF EDWARD THE FOURTH.

1461—1483.

CHAP. I.

Battle of Towton.—EDWARD's Coronation.—Battle of Hexham.—HENRY taken.—EDWARD's Marriage.—Promotion of the Queen's Friends.—WARWICK's Discontent.

BOOK IV. THE warmest sympathies of the people had raised Edward to the throne,¹ and even the church, abandoning the house of Lancaster, had contributed both to elevate and support him.² The ecclesiastic establishment found the queen and her friends more disposed to become its plunderers than its protectors.³ The clergy, like the people, saw in Henry, a feeble, disabled, incompetent, tho well-wishing king; and

¹ The monk of Croyland is emphatic: ‘The nobles of the kingdom, and all the people of the midland part of England, and of the east, west, and south, deserted Henry. They directed solemn ambassadors to Edward in Wales, to declare to him the wishes of the people, and to urge him to hasten into England, to help them, as delay was producing the danger.’ p. 532.

² Hearne’s Fragment mentions, that all gentlemen, both spiritual and temporal, from the greater part of the east and west, came to London to welcome Edward. p. 285. And Croyland, that he was received ‘*a clero et universo populo*, with immense joy. 532.

³ Croyland has left us one picture of this conduct. ‘Elated by this victory (Wakefield), they rushed like a whirlwind over England, and plundered it, without respect of persons or place. They attacked the churches, took away their vessels, books and clothes; even the sacramental pyxes, shaking out the eucharist; and slew the priests who resisted. So they acted, for a breadth of thirty miles, all the way from York nearly up to London.’ p. 531.

the uxoriousness natural to his debility, made the queen and her passions, prejudices, and craving adherents, the governors of the kingdom, not the general good. In this unhappy state, loyalty was sacrificed to expediency and resentment; and the new dynasty was created.

CHAP.
I.
REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

But the queen was now in the north, with a larger army raised in that part of England, than either party had yet commanded. Edward, with that promptitude of military judgment which gave him victory in every battle he fought, declined to be crowned,⁴ while this was unbroken; and on the day after his election, sent the duke of Norfolk into his county to raise men. On the next day, the 6th of March, Warwick went northward with his forces. On the 10th, the king's infantry followed: and on the 12th, the eighth day after his elevation, he left the metropolis himself, thro Bishopsgate, with the rest of his forces.⁵ He ordered lord Fitzwalter to take and maintain the passage at Ferrybridge.

The chief Lancastrian generals, were Somerset, Northumberland, and Clifford, with sir Andrew Trollope. Leaving Henry, the queen, and prince, at York, they advanced to meet Edward: and lord Clifford, with their cavalry, attempted to take the post at Ferrybridge, by surprize. This unexpected attack succeeded. Fitzwalter hearing an alarm, sprang out of his bed, and seizing his battle-axe, rushed without his armor into the conflict, and soon perished. Warwick, apprized of the disaster, hastened with the news to his friends. Edward immediately ordered every one to depart who was averse or afraid to fight, and promised rewards to all who were faith-

Queen's
success at
Ferry-
bridge.

⁴ Croyl. 532.

⁵ Hearne's Frag. 286.

BOOK
IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

29 March,
1461.
Battle of
Towton.

ful, and to those who should destroy any one that, when the battle begun, should retreat. Lord Falconbridge was dispatched to take a short circuit and surround Clifford, who fell back to prevent this evil. But his retreat was intercepted, and while displacing his gorget from pain or heat, an arrow lighted on his throat, and he immediately expired.*

Lord Falconbridge advanced in the twilight, with the van of Edward's army. Warwick followed with the main body, and sir John Wenlock conducted the rear. A sanguinary proclamation was made, that no prisoners should be taken, and no enemy saved. At nine in the morning, both armies began to come in sight of each other near Towton, about eight miles from York. Edward waited a short time for the arrival of the rest of his force, which soon came up in good order. Both parties prepared for a decisive conflict, with resolute courage. Henry's number was computed at 60,000 men. Edward's was 48,660. These were the largest armies of Englishmen that had ever yet disputed with each other for a sovereign. It was the eve of Palm-sunday, the commencement of the most solemn and affecting week of the whole Christian year; a season that rebuked, with silent eloquence, the purposes and the spirit of both. But soldiers, like statesmen, in the acting of their schemes have little sympathy with the feelings and hopes of religion, whatever recollections or remorse may afterwards occur. The two hosts were too eager for revenge and victory, to moralize. As if battle were the gate of paradise,

* Clifford being particularly hated for his murder of the young Rutland, his son was concealed, and brought up as a poor shepherd, till Henry VII. obtained the crown, when he was restored to his father's estates. Hall, 253.

and the future an incomprehensible dream, they raised against each other a tumultuous shout of execration and defiance, and at four o'clock in the afternoon,⁷ within three hours of complete darkness, began the mortal struggle, by lord Falconbridge advancing to attack. The wind was at first blowing strong against Edward's front; but as he was commencing the battle, it veered round, and setting full against his adversaries,⁸ drove a small flight of snow on their faces. Falconbridge ordered his archers to shoot one flight of arrows, and no more. These being aimed well, took effect. The Lancastrians were eager to return the mischief, but not able to discern the true distance for their pull, from the snow, and the wind breaking the force of their shafts; their shot fell many yards short of the Yorkists. They were suffered to expend their quivers thus unavailingly without knowing it, while the others picked them up, and then returned both these and their own with a destructive annoyance, which excited Northumberland and Trollope, who commanded the van guard, to advance immediately into a close combat.⁹

If either party hoped to decide the field before night-fall, both were disappointed by their mutual determination. The shades of evening came on, and neither had given way. The faint twilight disappeared and darkness followed, yet both were still fighting, and too furious to leave off. In vain resting nature summoned them to pause. They continued, as far as they could, the dismal struggle all night, disturbing its awful repose with the groans of dying misery; the fierce clashing of arms, at times en-

CHAP.
I.
REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

⁷ Hearne's Frag. 287. ⁸ Whet. 516. ⁹ Hall, 256. Whet. 516.

BOOK IV. lightening the gloom by the sparks struck out in their collision. What light could be obtained from fires and torches in some important stations was supplied. This midnight combat produced much disorder in both armies, but gave advantage to neither. The cheerful dawn appeared, but only to re-animate them to pursue the demon-work of rage and death. The sun again rose and proceeded onward to his noon, and yet the dreadful battle continued with lavish but still with indecisive slaughter. Edward had practised his father's policy, of carefully replacing the weary and wounded by fresh men, as long as he had any. But the conflict had now lasted so long, that all had been used, and the superior numbers of the queen's party began to be felt. At this critical juncture, when both sides were nearly exhausted, the duke of Norfolk arrived about noon, with the new force he had been sent to raise.¹⁰ This supply decided in Edward's favor, a struggle of an obstinacy rarely exampled and of a kind most abhorrent to humanity. Both sides gave no quarter—no one demanded any. Each individual fought for life and victory. Tenants were contending against their lords; sons, brothers, nephews, were striking at each other, and at their dearest relatives. As Henry's side at last gave way, it was found that the earls of Northumberland and Westmorland had perished in the field, with Trollope and many other distinguished persons. The earls of Devon and Wilts were taken. The dukes of Somerset and Exeter escaped.¹¹ All the high road, from the place

¹⁰ We owe the remarkable fact, of the battle beginning at four o'clock in the afternoon, and continuing thro the night, and of Norfolk's coming up the next day at noon, to Hearne's Fragment, p. 287.

¹¹ Hearne's Frag. 287. Croyl. 532. Fab. 473. Some of the names of the noblemen mentioned in Paston's letters, in 1 Fenn, 218-221, as having fallen, are wrong.

of battle almost to the walls of York, for six miles, was stained with blood, and strewed with corpses.¹² For two or three miles round the village, the streams of human life lay mixed with the snow, in furrows and puddles, revolting human sight and accusing human wickedness.¹³ It snowed all the time of the murderous conflict.¹⁴ It was the greatest, most destructive, and most decisive of all the battles that Englishmen had ever fought, either at home or on the continent. From 30 to 40,000 persons perished in these two dreadful days.¹⁵ The human heart revolts from this mass of blood and death : and as wars are evils of our own, and not of nature's production, we may blush or tremble, in contemplating these works of our self-will, that the divine image within us should, for vile passions and sordid interests, thus defile its sublime nature, and defy the laws and wishes of its mighty and benign original. It is inconsistent for man to complain of the evils of this life, and yet to sanction, panegyrize, or practise warfare ; the most extensive of those human miseries, with which mankind have deliberately afflicted themselves.

London was in great anxiety for the event, till Edward's letters to his mother arrived there on Easter eve, with the welcomed intelligence.¹⁶

¹² Whet. 516. ¹³ Croyl. 533. ¹⁴ Hearne's Frag. 287.

¹⁵ Croyland mentions, that they who buried the dead, declared, that 38,000 had fallen. p. 533. The Fragment makes the number on both sides 33,000, p. 287. Fabian says, that 30,000 fell. p. 473. Hall enumerates the slain in this battle, and at Ferrybridge, during the three days, at 36,776 persons. p. 266. This has an appearance of minute accuracy. The letter-writer at the time, in Fenn, makes the number on Henry's side alone, 20,000 ; but the list annexed to it gives the number of these, as reported by the heralds, to be 28,000. v. l. p. 219-21. Hence the 9000 in Wyrcester must be a mis-copy of his figures. Many of them are wrong in other places.

¹⁶ 1 Fenn, 219. Hearne's Frag. 287. Dr. Morton was taken at this battle. Fenn, 223. Hastings, on Edward's side, was here made a knight. Ib. 219.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

Edward marched immediately to York, took down the heads of his father and Salisbury, and buried them; but imitating the queen's resentment, beheaded the earls of Devon and Wiltshire, with others. While his light cavalry were out searching for Henry and the queen, these unfortunate sovereigns reached Berwick, and from thence sailed to Scotland, imploring aid of its king. He received them kindly, and appointed them an honorable support, which they rewarded by a gift of the town of Berwick.¹⁷

1461,
June.
Edward
crowned.

Edward passed his Easter at York, and moved on to Durham, completing the subjection of the country. He left Warwick, to watch the queen's movements, and returning towards the metropolis, on the 1st of June arrived at Sheen.¹⁸ Carlisle being endangered by the Scots, he was about to defer his coronation again, that he might relieve it; but news arriving that lord Montague had defeated the besiegers,¹⁹ he prepared for his final honor; and on the 26th of June, made his triumphant entry into London to receive it. The lord mayor and aldermen in scarlet, with 400 of the common council, well horsed and clad in green, met him on the way, and conducted him to the Tower. The next day he made thirty-two knights of the Bath, and these in the afternoon, preceding him in their gowns and hoods of white silk, conducted him to Westminster. On Sunday the 29th of June, he was solemnly crowned there by the arch-

¹⁷ Hall, 256. The act of attainder recites the delivery of Berwick; and also notices an attempt to give Carlisle to the Scots, 'the key of the west marches of England.' Parl. Rolls, p. 478. It is justice to the queen to add Fabian's paragraph. 'Thus the noble and most bounteous princess, queen Margaret, of whom many untrue surmise was imagined and told, was fain to fly comfortless, and lost all that she had in England for ever.' p. 473.

¹⁸ Fab. 474.

¹⁹ Fenn, 231. On 26 June 1461, Henry and lord Ross were again defeated at Ryton and Brauncepath, in Durham. P. Rolls, 478.

bishop of Canterbury, with great triumph and pomp.²⁰ In the autumn, the queen's friends were discomfited in Wales.²¹

On the 4th of November, his first parliament met.²² The speaker addressed him, with much complimentary flattery, even noticing his personal advantages,²³ but closing more wisely with a request, that the extortion, murder, rape, effusion of innocent blood, riot, and unrighteousness, which had in Henry's time been permitted with impunity, might be corrected and punished. Acts were passed declaring Edward's title to the crown, and pronouncing Henry to be an usurper; attainting the nobles and gentry, who had most distinguished themselves against the house of York;²⁴ vesting all the possessions of Henry in

CHAP.
I.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

²⁰ Hearne's Frag. 288. Fab. 474.

²¹ Duke Exeter, Jasper earl Pembrroke, and others, were embattled against Edward's forces on the 13th of October, at Tatehill, near Carnarvon. 5. P. Rolls, 478. But a letter in Fenn states the result. 'All the castles and holds, both in South Wales and North Wales, are given up into the king's hands, and duke Exeter and earl Pembrroke are fled, and taken the mountains; and divers lords, with great puissance, are after them; and the most part of gentlemen and men of worship are come in to the king.' 1 Fenn, 243.

²² Among the lords who then assembled, were,

Duke of Norfolk.	Lords	Graystock.
Earls	Warwick.	Audley.
	Worcester.	Scroope.
	Essex.	Clinton.
	Kent.	Hastings.
Lords	Grey of Ruthyn.	Cobham.
	Southwick.	Stourton.
	Scroop of Upsal.	Fitzhugh.

The spiritual peers named, were,

Abps. of Canterbury.	Bps. of Worcester.
York.	Lincoln.
Bps.	Durham.
London.	Bangor.
Winchester.	Chester.
Rochester.	
Ely.	

Seven abbots, and the prior of St. John. Parl. Rolls, v. 5. p. 461.

²³ 'The beauts of personage that it hath pleased Almighty God to send you.' Parl. Rolls, 5. p. 463.

²⁴ The chief were, Somerset and Exeter; the earls of Devonshire and

BOOK IV. Edward; confirming the new king's grants to his mother,²⁵ and repealing the former enactment against his father and his friends. A statute, important to the pacification of the country, was made, prohibiting the great and rich from giving or wearing any liveries or signs of companionship, except while serving under the king; from receiving or maintaining plunderers, robbers, malefactors, or unlawful hunters, and from allowing dice and cards in their houses beyond the twelve days of Christmas.²⁶ Edward created several peers; and closed the session by the unusual, but popular measure, of a speech to the commons, not strictly grammatical, delivered by himself from the throne.²⁷

Queen Margaret continued in Scotland with her

Northumberland, who had fallen; the earls of Pembroke and Wilts; lords Ross and Neville, Beaumont, Clifford, Wells, and the deceased lords Rougemont and Dacre; sir John Skydmore; with many knights, and some priests and esquires. Parl. Rolls, 5. p. 477-83.

²⁵ These were three annuities, of 400*l.*; 289*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*; and 100*l.* Parl. Rolls, 484.

²⁶ Parl. Rolls, 488.

²⁷ He began with addressing their speaker by his name. 'James Strangways, and ye that be come for the commons of this my land, for the true hearts and tender considerations that ye have had to my right and title, that I and my ancestors have had unto the crown of this realm, the which from us have been long time withheld: and now, thanked be Almighty God, of whose grace groweth all victory, by your true hearts and great assistance, I am restored unto that which is my right and title. Wherefore I thank you, as heartily as I can. Also for the tender and true hearts that ye have shewed unto me, in that ye have tenderly had in remembrance the correction of the horrible murder and cruel death of my lord my father, my brother Rutland, and my cousin of Salisbury, and other, I thank you right heartily. And I shall be unto you, with the grace of Almighty God, as good and gracious sovereign lord, as ever was any of my noble progenitors to their subjects and liegemen.'

'And for the faithful and loving hearts, and also the great labors that ye have borne and sustained towards me, in the recovering of my said right and title, which I now possess, I thank you with all my heart. And if I had any better good to reward you withall, than my body, ye should have it; the which shall always be ready for your defence; never sparing nor letting for no jeopardy; praying you all for your hearty assistance and good continuance, as I shall be unto you your very righteous and loving liege lord.' Parl. Rolls, 5. p. 487.

husband and son;²⁸ but her friends in France, tho' themselves distressed, continued to counsel her with their best advice, and to cheer her with distant hopes.²⁹ The nation manifestly favored the change of dynasty: but there were still friends enough of the old system to provide materials for further enterprises, tho' not for beneficial ones; and the queen, who would deserve our praise, if her judgment and moral prudence had equalled her spirit, perseverance, and love of power, sailed in the spring of 1462 to France, and raised there, from adventurers that in every country were wanting employment, a small army, under sir Piers de Bracy, a Breton knight of some name, with which in October she coasted on to Newcastle, and landed. Edward issued proclamations, that all men between sixteen and sixty, should be ready to attend him when called on; and Warwick was sent towards Scotland with 20,000 men.³⁰ The country did not rise to aid the queen as she expected; and hearing that Edward was advancing with hasty marches to meet her, she retired to her ships, to return to France; a tempest wrecked her, and drowned all her treasure: a fisherman's boat saved her; and with sir Piers, she reached Berwick. Part of her army was thrown on land at Bamborough.

CHAP.
I.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

²⁸ He at Kirkcudbright, she and the prince at Edinburgh, in the autumn of 1461. 1 Fenn, 249.

²⁹ Lord Hungerford, who had been arrested at Dieppe, thus wrote to her: 'Madam, fear you not, but be of good comfort; and beware that ye adventure not your person, nor my lord the prince, by the sea, till ye have other word from us, unless your person cannot be sure there as ye are, and that extreme necessity drive you hence. And for God's sake let the king's highness be advised the same; for as we be informed, the earl of March is in Wales by land, and hath sent his navy thither by sea. And, madam, think verily we shall not sooner be delivered but that we will come straight to you, without death take us by the way; the which we trust he will not, till we see the king and you peaceably again in your realm.' 1 Fenn, 249.

³⁰ 1 Fenn, 263-9. Hearne's Frag. 290.

BOOK IV. Seeing no escape, they burnt their ships in despair, and flying into Holy Island, were pursued and destroyed.³¹ A Scottish force joining the queen, she took Alnwick and Bamborough castles, which she committed to the care of Bracy and Somerset; and proceeded thro Northumberland and Durham.³²

**REIGN OF
EDW. IV.**

Edward, with his peculiar celerity and decision, embarked two separate bodies at Lynn and Hull, sent lord Montague to raise what men he could in Northumberland, and on the 3d November, marched himself, with his most attached nobles, to York. In December 1463, stationing himself at Durham, he besieged Alnwick by lord Kent, Dunstanburgh by lord Worcester, and Bamborough by lord Montague, while Warwick, from Warkworth, rode every day to superintend all the sieges.³³ Somerset now thought Edward so firm on the throne, that he offered to surrender Bamborough castle, if admitted to the king's grace.³⁴ This was wisely granted; and Somerset, whose family had been the bitterest enemies of the house of York, was now seen fighting, with his new friends, against those for whom his father had sacrificed his life.³⁵ To the other lords, who could not regain their lands, as Pembroke and Ross, a safe-conduct was given for their return to Scotland.³⁶

Sir Piers Bracy soon appeared from that country with a considerable Scottish army to relieve Alnwick. The earl of Warwick, who commanded the siege with Somerset and Worcester, perceiving their numbers to be inferior to their opponents, took a station in a field between the castle and a marsh. If the Scots had been bold enough, they might have destroyed

³¹ Hearne's Frag. 291. W. Wyr. 494.

³² Hall, 259.

³³ 1 Fenn, 275.

³⁴ 2 Lel. 499.

³⁵ W. Wyr. 495. 2 Lel. 499. Hall, 256.

³⁶ W. Wyr. 496.

the English; but their attack was not sufficiently vigorous, and failed. Somerset exerted himself manfully, in animating the English to maintain their camp. Edward was so gratified by his valor, that he gave him, every week, twenty marcs for his expenses, and maintained his retinue. Alnwick surrendered. A truce was made between England and France.³⁷

CHAP.
I.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

In April, the queen sailed, with her son and remaining friends, to Sluys in Flanders, and went to the duke of Burgundy at Lisle, and earnestly implored his aid to regain her throne. He supplied her with money for her expenses; and from thence she went to her father in Lorraine, who gave her a castle for her present residence, while she waited the issue of the course of things.³⁸

The victories of Edward, the popularity of his government, the parliamentary settlement, and his three years possession, would lead us to expect his continued enjoyment of a tranquil reign; and yet its fourth year, 1464, was so disturbed with insurrections, that in February the parliament was informed, that he could not attend it, for the traitorous commotions in divers parts, especially at Gloucester;³⁹ and it was therefore prorogued to the 5th of May; when it was again announced, that the king could not be there, from the conspiracies that were prosecuting against him.⁴⁰ In March, we find that there were in hostile movement, in Lancashire and Cheshire, above ten thousand men:⁴¹ and in April, the queen with her husband were encouraged to make the

³⁷ W. Wyr. 496.

³⁸ Ib. 497. It is before this voyage that I would place the incident mentioned in the following note 50. p. 240. ³⁹ Parl. Rolls, 5. p. 499.

⁴⁰ Parl. Rolls, p. 500. The parliament was therefore prorogued to 20th November, to meet at York; and then to 21st January 1465, to assemble at Westminster. Ib. ⁴¹ 1 Fenn, 287.

BOOK IV. serious invasion, that led to the battle of Hexham. On the 11th of May, Edward found the hostilities so formidable, that he issued orders for all his subjects to arm.⁴²

REIGN OF EDW. IV.

A passage in the monk of Croyland induces the supposition, that the church establishment, or a considerable proportion of it, was now in a state of enmity against him. It has been remarked before, that they contributed greatly to enthrone him,⁴³ and the pope had felicitated him on his coronation.⁴⁴ Yet now we find, that in 1465, "Many bishops and abbots were accused to the king, because, by letters and by money, they had secretly solicited Margaret, then abroad, to invade him, promising counsel and aid."⁴⁵ It is probable that after Edward was fully seated on the throne, the church found the reforming principles to spread under the new dynasty; and that the nobility and gentry, who had favored it, were influencing him against their temporalities. Henry and Margaret were more natural supporters of their old immunities and wealth, than the new interests, feelings, and connections of the house of York. Hence, discerning their danger from the revolution they had patronized, and whose progress tended to involve themselves, they attempted to overturn it.

Edward's general policy was immediate vigor, followed by pardon to those who would submit.⁴⁶ But the forces which the queen had obtained from Scotland, presented chances of success which overcame the new loyalty and plighted honor of Somerset: and he suddenly departed from Edward, by private

⁴² 11 Rym. 524.

⁴³ See before, p. 226.

⁴⁴ The letter of Pius II. is dated 11 Kal. Apr. 1462. 11 Rym. 235.

⁴⁵ Hist. Croyl. 539.

⁴⁶ The Parl. Rolls, p. 511, states instances of his forgiveness.

ways out of North Wales to Northumberland; and there possessed himself of the three castles of Bamborough, Dunstanborough and Alnwick, and raised the standard of revolt in favor of Henry.⁴⁷

The queen traversed the north of England with her Scottish army, plundering and ravaging her enemies. Edward sent lord Montague, the brother of Warwick, with the advance of his forces, who met a large division of her army, under lord Hungerford, at Hegeley Moor. These gave way as he attacked; and sir Ralph Piercy, who had also been reconciled to Edward, but revolted, fell there, exclaiming as he expired, with an allusion of his loyalty to Henry, but with a forgetfulness of his sworn submission and abandoned allegiance to Edward, "I have saved the bird in my bosom."⁴⁸

Montague pressed vigorously his pursuit, and reached the queen's collected strength near Hexham; emboldened by the presence of Henry, and aware that all their prospects of his restoration depended on the event of the now approaching conflict. It was fiercely and obstinately contested, tho the opposing armies do not seem to have been numerous. But the conduct and bravery of Montague prevailed. By a well-directed charge, he pierced the battle of the Lancastrians, and broke up their array.⁴⁹ In

CHAP.
I.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

1464,
April 25.
Battle of
Hegeley
Moor.

Battle of
Hexham,
8 May,
1464.

⁴⁷ The act attainting him states, that he had been received into Edward's grace, 'by his pretended humbleness, meekness, and lowly suit;' and that he had been bounteously and largely treated, 'to the intent that thereby, of very gentilness, and the noble honor that ought to be grounded in every gentleman, he should have been established in firm faith and truth' to Edward, who had caused him to be restored to his state and dignity. *Ib.* 511. One chronicle intimates, that he was not paid the appointments given him by Edward. *2 Lel.* 499.

⁴⁸ Hall, 260. Hall states these events with some confusion as to the time. I take the data from the Parliamentary Record, 510-512.

⁴⁹ Hall, 260. W. Wycrestre makes the force of Montague but 4000 men. *p.* 498.

BOOK IV. their flight, Somerset was taken, and immediately beheaded : the third duke of the line that had fallen by a violent death since Henry's accession. On the next day, lords Ross and Hungerford were found in a wood, and suffered the same fate, with others. The king met Montague at York, and creating him earl of Northumberland, gave him all the estates and honors which the possessors of that title had enjoyed.⁵⁰

Henry had retired into Lancashire in disguise. A monk betrayed his retreat, and in July he was taken, at dinner, in Waddington Hall, by some deception. He escaped for a while into an adjoining wood, but was there again found, and brought towards London. Warwick met him at Islington, and had the cruelty to subject his former sovereign — a man so personally unoffending to any, and now so interesting to all, from the great mutation of his high estate — to the indignity of having his legs bound with leather straps to the stirrups of the horse. In this degraded state — a vain appeal to every good sympathy of his now insulting subjects, he was led thro Cheap and Cornhill to the Tower,⁵¹ where he remained for the next five years,⁵² happier for his

⁵⁰ W. Wyr. 498, 9. The incidents mentioned, but not dated, by Monstrelet, of the queen's being plundered by robbers, in her flight in a forest; of her escaping, during their quarrel about the booty, with her son, into the wood: of another depredator there suddenly meeting her; of her advancing to him with courageous despair, and saying to him, 'Take him, my friend; save the son of thy king;' and of the man's being so impressed by her noble spirit, as to conduct her safely to the sea-shore, whence she escaped to Sluys in Flanders, are usually connected with the battle of Hexham. But they rather suit the period mentioned before, p. 237. Monstrelet adds, that Henry, at this time, retired into Wales. v. 10. p. 125. Johnes has inserted 'the forest of Hainault,' in his translation; but the French of my edition of Monstrelet is, 'une forest en Angleterre.' T. 3. p. 64.

⁵¹ W. Wyr. 504. Hearne's Frag. 292. 2 Lel. 500. Fab. 495. Hall, 261.

⁵² Till the 18th October, 1469. Hearne's Frag. 292.

degradation. The few remaining friends of his family found safety where they could. His queen obtained an asylum on the continent, with her father. The young duke of Somerset, and his brother, sailed to Flanders, and lived there in great misery, like duke Exeter, till a foreign country at last allowed them a small pension. Jasper, the earl of Pembroke, went from county to county, no where finding safety, comfort, or support.⁵³ The hearts, as well as the power and law of the country, were now with Edward; and he proceeded to establish those measures which his own permanent safety, and the welfare of the country, most required.

CHAP.
I.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

He rewarded liberally, out of the forfeited estates of his adversaries, all those who had faithfully served him; and adopted a kindness and familiarity in his manners towards all classes of his subjects, which riveted their attachment.⁵⁴ He made new coins,⁵⁵ altered others⁵⁶; and for temporary purposes, he, with questionable policy, raised their value, and the price of gold and silver.⁵⁷ The wisdom or ultimate effects of these operations on the coin, we cannot now estimate; they were probably of advantage only for a time to his exchequer. A contemporary observed,

⁵³ Comes informs us, ‘ Some of these were reduced to such extremity and want, before the duke of Burgundy received them, that no common beggar could have been in greater. I saw the duke of Exeter, barefoot and barelegged, begging his bread from door to door. There were also some of the Somersets, and others. 1, p. 239, 240.

⁵⁴ Hall, 262.

⁵⁵ There were royals and nobles. He made the royal of gold of the value of 10*s.* and the half royal 5*s.* Hearne’s Frag. 294. Hall, 262.

⁵⁶ The old noble, which was 6*s.* 8*d.* he raised to 8*s.* 4*d.* (W. Wyr. 500) and called it an angel. Hearne’s Frag. 294. This author seems to mistake its new price; but adds, that he made the groat, the half groat, and pence, of less value, by 8*d.* in the ounce, than the old ones were. p. 294.

⁵⁷ ‘ Fine gold was enhanced to 40*s.* the ounce, and other base gold after this rate.’ Hearne’s Frag. 294. Silver also ‘ was heightened.’ Fab. 495.

BOOK
IV.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

that they were greatly to the disadvantage of the nobles.⁵⁸ This remark creates a doubt, if they could have been of general benefit. But his most distinguished action, which few minds have the generous magnanimity and wisdom to practise, was the proclamation of a general amnesty to all who would submit.⁵⁹ This judicious clemency endeared him to the great body of the people, and he lived to feel the value and efficacy of their steady attachment. The heart blesses the voice of mercy.

Edward's
private
marriage.

This popularity was not diminished by his peculiar marriage, tho' that was destined, like Henry's, to put his crown in jeopardy, and for a time to produce his dethronement, and ultimately to bring destruction on his sons. Several matches had been speculated for him. The princess of Scotland, the king of Castile's daughter, and lady Bona, of Savoy, have been mentioned as projects of this sort; but it seems an error to state, that any were formally applied for.⁶⁰ The opinion which he chose to circulate, and which the old chronicler, who was then alive, has transmitted to us, was, that he found no convenient match out of his realm, because no foreign prince was inclined, in his then state of affairs, and as Henry was alive, to form an alliance with him.⁶¹ We shall see in the reign of Richard III., that this asserted disinclination of the foreign powers, at least as to Spain, was not strictly true. The fact was, that Edward was rather disposed to be the easy gentleman than the king of state; and made his own feelings too exclusively his

⁵⁸ ‘Ad summum dampnum magnum regni.’ W. Wyr. 500.

⁵⁹ Hall, 262.

⁶⁰ Hall mentions all these; 262, 263; and sends Warwick to Spain, as others do to France. But the contemporary Fragment denies that Warwick went there, 292. ⁶¹ Hearne's Frag. 292.

guide, without duly adverting to the expediencies of his high station, and the consequences of his actions. He met, by accident, in April 1464, while watching the rebellions which her relations abetted, the widow of sir John Grey, who had perished against his own friends at the second battle of St. Albans. He was hunting near Stoney Stratford, and alighted for refreshment at the duchess of Bedford's. She had married sir Richard Woodville, whom we have already noticed as lord Rivers. Lady Elizabeth Grey was their daughter, and was then with her. It was a favorable opportunity to petition him for a restoration of some of sir John's confiscated possessions, and she knelt before him as a petitioner. Her person, her manner, her voice, her modesty, her lovely smile, and graceful movement, arrested his attention and affected his heart. He beheld her with the eyes of love and admiration.²² The new feeling exactly coincided with his wishes for a queen; she was too virtuous to be seduced, and too interesting to be forgotten; and after various visits, early in the morning, on the 1st of May 1464,²³ by a private marriage, he made her his queen. It was for some time kept a careful secret. He felt its perilous consequences at the time, but would not refrain from the self indulgence. He had, therefore, both the gratification and the consequential sufferings.

But at Michaelmas the king avowed it; and she was presented, by the dukes of Clarence and Warwick, to the lords and people at Reading, as their queen. In December, lands to the annual value of

CHAP.
I.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

²² Hall, 264.

²³ The fragment misdates the year 1463; it was 1464. Only her mother, two gentlewomen, a priest, and a boy were present. Fab. 495.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

4000 marcs were settled upon her : and on the Ascension-day, in the following year, the king made thirty-eight knights at the Tower of London, preparatory to her coronation. The lord mayor, aldermen, and citizens, rode beyond Shooter's hill, to meet and conduct her to the king. Soon afterwards, she rode in a horse-litter, with the new knights, thro Cheapside to Westminster. On the following Sunday she was crowned, and tournaments were held on the occasion, at which lord Stanley won the ring and ruby.⁶⁴

Conse-
quences
of this
marriage.

From the time of the avowal of this marriage, a new political revolution began to be formed in England, dividing Edward from the nobles, who had been so steadily his father's friends, and to whom he chiefly owed his royal dignity. The causes of this change there is no difficulty in tracing.

The power of the landed aristocracy was now so great as to be dangerous to the crown, whenever the administration became, or by misrepresentation could be made, to be unpopular. It had already overturned Suffolk, the Somersets, and the queen's government; and was proudly and jealously watching Edward, whose gratitude to Warwick, and other supporters, had increased their means of influence and authority, by the honors and possessions he had given them.

That Edward felt himself to be a king made so by others, and governed by his makers, or was led to

⁶⁴ W. Wyr. 500-3. About this time, a curious passage occurs in our old chronicler, Hall. Edward granted license 'for certain Cotswold sheep to be transported to Spain, as people report, which have there so multiplied and increased, that it hath turned the commodity of England much to the Spanish profit, and to no small hinderance of the gain which was beforetimes in England raised of wool.' p. 266. Has the late Merino breed, introduced into this country and France from Spain, proceeded from these?

CHAP.
I.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

perceive it by his queen, whose education had been among their opponents, and whose feelings were not soothed by their displeasure at her selection, may be inferred, from the speed with which he endeavored to create a new nobility out of her family, or connected with it, which might counteract the dominant aristocracy, whose power he had experienced, whose jealousies he saw, and of whose continuing fidelity he was never certain. In March 1466, he displaced lord Mountjoy, to make his queen's father the lord treasurer : a change which displeased greatly the irritable Warwick, and other expecting lords.⁶⁴ In September and October, he married Thomas Grey, the son of her first marriage, to the heiress of the duke of Exeter, his own niece, whom Warwick had destined for his nephew ; another excitement of this peer's resentful sensibility⁶⁵; and her sister Maria to the heir of lord Herbert, to the further dissatisfaction of his ancient nobles.⁶⁶ Another sister was wedded to the duke of Buckingham, with equal vexation to Warwick ; and another to the heir of the earl Arundel; and two others to the families of the lords Essex and Kent.⁶⁷ John, another brother, whom he had made knight of the Bath, was matched with the old duchess of Norfolk;⁶⁸ and to the queen's brother Anthony,⁶⁹ the heiress of lord Scales was united, and his title given.

⁶⁴ W. Wyr. 506. He was also made grand constable, on Worcester's death or resignation, Rym. Fœd. 11. p. 581.

⁶⁵ W. Wyr. 507. ⁶⁶ Ib. 506.

⁶⁶ Ib. and 501. Hall, 264, 5. Cal. Rot. Pet. p. 312. Lord Mau-travers, the husband of one of the queen's sisters, was made warden and keeper of the New Forest, and Lyndhurst. Cal. Rot. 312. Sir Thomas Vaughan, another relation, was appointed treasurer of the king's chamber, and master of his jewels. p. 311.

⁶⁷ W. Wyr. 501.

⁶⁸ This nobleman, the future lord Rivers, became distinguished for his chivalric attainments.. He gave a specimen of his knightly dexterity, when the illegitimate son of the duke of Burgundy came to London, to

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

Thus all the great estates and titles, which the noblest families desired to be allied with, were bestowed on the queen's family, with a rapidity which alarmed as much as it disappointed. If the motive could be doubted, the effects were unquestionable. These marriages threw the ancient nobility into the back ground, and brought forward a new set of individuals, to take from them their power, influence,

make overtures for the duke's eldest son's marriage with Edward's sister. Their encounter at a tournaiment in Smithfield is thus described : On the first day, ' They ran together certain courses with sharp spears, and so departed with equal honor. The next day they entered the field, the bastard sitting on a bay courser, being somewhat dim of sight, and the lord Scales had a gray courser, on whose schaffron was a long and a sharp pike of steel. When these two valiant persons coped together at the tourney, the lord Scale's horse, by chance or by custom, thrust his pike into the nostrils of the horse of the bastard, so that, for very pain, he mounted so high, that he fell on one side with his master ; and the lord Scales rode round about him, with his sword shaking in his hand, till the king commauded the marshall to help up the bastard, which openly said, ' I cannot hold by the clouds ; but tho my horse failed me, surely I will not fail my counter-companions.' And when he was remounted, he made a countenance to assail his adversary ; but the king, either favoring his brother's honor then gotten, or mistrusting the shame which might come to the bastard, if he were again foiled, caused the heralds to cry a lostel, and every man to depart. The morrow after, the two noblemen came into the field on foot, with two poleaxes, and there fought valiantly like two courageous champions ; but at the last, the point of the axe of the lord Scales happened to enter into the sight of the helm of the bastard, and by pure force he might have plucked him on his knees, when the king suddenly cast down his warden, and then the marshalls them severed. The bastard, not content with this chancce, very desirous to be avenged, trusting on his cunning at the poleaxe, (the which feat he had greatly exercised, and therein had a great experiment,) required the king, of justice, that he might perform his enterprize : the lord Scales not refused it. The king said he would ask counsel, and so called to him the constable and marshall, with the officers of arms. After long consultation had, and laws of arms rehearsed, it was declared to the bastard, for a sentence definitive, by the duke of Clarence, then constable of England, and the duke of Norfolk, earl marshall, that if he would prosecute farther this attempted challenge, he must, by the law of arms, be delivered to his adversary in the same case, and like condition, as he was when he was taken from him ; that is to say, the point of the lord Scales' axe to be fixed in the sight of his helm, as deep as it was when they were severed. The bastard, hearing this judgment, doubted much the sequel, if he should so proceed again. Wherefore he was content to relinquish his challenge.' Hall, p. 268. Similar combats followed.

CHAP.
I.
REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

honors, and emoluments. The chroniclers of the time announce both this result, and the discontent it excited;⁷¹ and Warwick's indignation was raised to its height, when the king, understanding that he was favoring a marriage between his eldest daughter and Clarence the brother of Edward, expressed his disapprobation,⁷² and endeavored to prevent it. That the king should take the chancellor's seals from his brother,⁷³ and marry his own sister Margaret to the presumptive duke of Burgundy, to whose politics Warwick was opposed, against the advice and intreaties of this affronted nobleman,⁷⁴ whose counsels he had before thwarted in the choice of his own queen, destroyed all the remaining attachment which this formidable earl had preserved for the son of his ancient friend, and made him anxious to throw down the royal idol, whom he believed his exertions had set up, and could as easily demolish.⁷⁵ The first emo-

⁷¹ W. Wyr. 506, 7. Hist. Croyl. 542.

⁷² W. Wyr. 511. Hearne's Frag. 300.

⁷³ W. Wyr. 508, compared with Parl. Rolls, 572 and 622.

⁷⁴ Croyl. 551. Croyland says, that until this marriage, Warwick had kept on terms with the queen's friends. Hearne's Fragment mentions Warwick's connections with Louis. 296-8.

⁷⁵ It was on the 18th of June 1468, that Margaret, the lady who became afterwards so celebrated for being the persecuting Juno to Henry VII. the English Aeneas, went from St. Paul's to Stratford, on her way to Flanders. As she passed thro the city, Warwick rode before her, as if a cordial approver of the match, while a great number of ladies, earls and barons, formed her stately train. The lord mayor presented her with a pair of rich bascons, containing 100*l.* in gold. She landed at Sluys, where she was received as their sovereign lady. The people made illuminations, with wax baroches and torches, from every house. Pinnacles of fire, subtilly devised, were set blazing thro the town and castle; and every householder stood in the street, outside of his door, with a torch burning in his hand. Rich pageants of Jason and the golden fleece, and of queens Vashti and Esther, were exhibited on a tapestry covered stage, near her lodging; and tournaments began, in which the queen's brother Anthony, then lord Scales, won the first prize. Harl. MSS. N° 543, p. 131. Oliver de la Marche also describes these festivities. She was married to the duke on the 9th July 1468. A singular calamity attended their wedding-night: a fire burst out in

BOOK IV. tions of his displeasure appeared to be soothed by a temporary reconciliation, in 1468:⁷⁶ but as all the causes of his mental exacerbation continued to exist, no pacification could last.

REIGN OF EDW. IV.

At this time it is remarked, by an author living at that period,⁷⁷ that none before Warwick had, in England, half the possessions which he then enjoyed. He had the entire earldom of Warwick, all the lands of the Spencers, and the earldom of Salisbury; he was great chamberlain of England, the chief admiral, and the captain of Calais, and also lieutenant of Ireland: an accumulation of honors and power, which made him inferior only to his sovereign.⁷⁸

The first act of defiance displayed towards Edward, was the marriage of his own daughter with Clarence, the brother of the king. His perseverance in this alliance, which alarmed Edward, discovers to us, perhaps, another cause of Warwick's displeasure against him. The proud earl may have intended his daughter to have been the queen of England; and if so, Edward's preference of an humbler beauty was an incurable wound to his ambition, not likely to be forgiven by his vindictive vanity. That he had a daughter then marriageable, and that he was desirous

the castle where they slept, from which they escaped with difficulty. It was while in the service of this lady, in Flanders, that Caxton learnt the art of printing, then recently discovered.

⁷⁶ W. Wyr. 512, 13.

⁷⁷ This is the author of the Fragment published by Hearne. He says, ' My purpose is, and shall be, as touching the life of Edward IV. to write and show those and such things which I have heard of his own mouth; and also impart of such things in the which I have been personally present, as well within the royaule as without, during a certain space, more especial from 1468 to 1482.' He also appeals to Thomas duke of Norfolk, treasurer of England, in confirmation of his veracity. Frag. Sprotts. 299.

⁷⁸ These possessions, he seems to mean the official situations which Warwick enjoyed, exclusive of his own estates, amounted to 20,000 marcs a year. Frig. 300. Comines.

to ally her with the royal blood, is evident from her nuptials with Clarence. It is therefore probable, that a man of his pride and temper considered Edward's selection of the daughter of sir Richard Woodville, to the neglect of his own, as an unpardonable offence. Edward expressed his displeasure, that the match with Clarence should have been made without his privity. The earl received the rebuke with no humble spirit. Unkind words passed ; from that day their former attachment ceased :⁷⁹ Edward regarded Warwick with the eye of mistrust ;⁸⁰ and Warwick soon began to form a conspiracy to dethrone Edward. He solicited his brothers, the marquis Montague, and the archbishop of York, to unite with him. They gave a verbal assent to his plans, but were rather disposed to regret than to encourage them.⁸¹ Rebellion, treason, and bloodshed, seemed blameless amusements to the aristocracy of that day, whenever its pride was affronted, or its rapacity disappointed. The sword was unsheathed at every gust of passion ; and the calculations of success or failure comprised all that conscience, law, or loyalty then considered. Their religion had a ceremonial pliability, which made pardon at all times an easy purchase. The divine forgiveness was made marketable on earth ; and this belief released worldly crime from all anxiety as to its future responsibilities. Hence no fears remained, but for the axe, the gibbet, and the confiscation. The moral sympathies could arise only from a better education.

A messenger, with letters from Margaret, was in-

CHAP.
I.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

⁷⁹ Frag. 200.

⁸⁰ W. Wyr. 511.

⁸¹ Hall gives the speech of Warwick to them, which we cannot doubt to be an effusion of his own fancy. 269.

BOOK IV. tercepted by lord Herbert, in Wales, and, on his arrest, accused Warwick of treachery to the king, from words which he had heard on the continent. Edward sent the man to earl Warwick to be examined, and the charge was deemed frivolous ; but the king appointed to himself a body guard of 200 brave archers, and with these he rode to Coventry. An apparent reconciliation was there made by the archbishop of York, between his brother and the king, and the queen's family ; and Edward restored to the prelate some lands that had been resumed.⁸²

**REIGN OF
EDW. IV.**

Ignorant of the storm that was forming against him, Edward met his parliament in June, with a kind and liberal speech. Warwick's brother, the chancellor archbishop, being absent, the king's father-in-law, the earl of Rivers, as treasurer of England, assured the commons of the enjoyment of their liberties and privileges ; and then, the sovereign personally addressed them. He declared that he purposed to live upon his own, and not to charge his subjects but in great and urgent cases, concerning more their own weal, and the defence of the kingdom, than his pleasure. For their good wills, kindness, and true hearts, he thanked them as heartily as he could, and added, “ I shall be to you a good and gracious king, and reign as right wisely upon you, as ever did any of my progenitors ; and shall also, in time of need, apply my person for the weal and defence of you, and of this my realm, not sparing my life or body for any jeopardy that may happen to the same.”⁸³ A long act of resumption of former royal grants was passed, with numerous exceptions, as usual. On the 11th of July, the parliament was, on account of a beginning pestilence from

⁸² W. Wyr. 513.

⁸³ Parl. Rolls, 572.

the heat, adjourned to November. It was then pro-
rogued to the 5th of May, at Reading, from which they
adjourned to the 12th of May, at Westminster.⁸⁴

When the parliament met, Stillington, the bishop
of Bath and Wells, addressed it as chancellor. He
drew a strong picture of the state of the kingdom, at
the king's accession : " At that time, this land was
full naked and barren of justice : the peace not kept,
nor laws duly ministered. It was spoiled of the
crown of France, the duchies of Normandy, Gascony,
and Guienne, and surrounded on every side with
enmity ; as with Denmark, Spain, Scotland, and
Britany ; and also with old and ancient enemies of
France."⁸⁵ He reminded them, that the king had
concluded a perpetual peace with Spain, commercial
treaties with Denmark, and Germany, and Naples ;
and a peace for fifty years with Scotland ; and had
begun a treaty with the king of Arragon, and an
amity with Bretagne ; and had married his sister
Margaret to the duke of Burgundy. He declared,
that his sovereign had done these things as means to
a principal intent, which was to minish and lessen
the power of his ancient adversary of France. He
avowed the king's intention to cross the sea, and
subdue his great rebel and adversary, Louis, the
usurping king of that country ; mentioned the invita-
tions he had received, from both Burgundy and
Britany, for that purpose ; and called upon parlia-
ment for its assistance and co-operation.⁸⁶ The com-
mons voted two-fifteenths and two-tenths for his
supplies, and confirmed the queen's dower. A pe-
tition was presented, to have all robberies of church
plate, crosses, silk ornaments, and jewels, and of

CHAP.
I.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

1468.
17 May.

⁸⁴ Parl. Rolls, 618, 19.

⁸⁵ Ib. 622.

⁸⁶ Ib. 623.

BOOK
IV.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

sepulchres, which was ascribed to lollards and heretics, declared high treason : but the king wisely gave his qualifying negative to a proposition so outrageous.⁷⁷ It is probable, that Edward had now become sensible that the minds of his nobility were assuming a warlike port, and that it would be prudent to occupy them in a foreign warfare. But to plunge another country into the miseries of an invasion, for his own security, is an act of selfish immorality, which never prospers to the individual who attempts it. Its fruits to Henry V. had been the shortening of his own life, and the deposition of his son. But France was saved from the calamity, by the backwardness of the English aristocracy, and by the counteracting plans of Warwick and his confederates. An order was made in July 1468, to raise troops for the defence of the kingdom :⁷⁸ but they were not employed abroad. Louis XI. was a politic sovereign, and took every measure that his sagacity could devise to avert an attack, which, tho' it might not have achieved the conquest of France, would have filled it with bloodshed and misery. Lord Scales was preparing, in October, to sail with a force to Bretagne, when the news arrived that the duke had been induced to make a truce with Louis, who at the same time conciliated Burgundy.⁷⁹ This wise conduct paralyzed the arm of English hostility.

1468,
October.

Margaret lay a while with a small fleet at Harfleur, threatening to invade Edward ; and lord Scales was dispatched with a fleet of Genoese galleys, and English ships, with 5000 men, to intercept her. The queen was too wise to risk the attempt, and Scales

⁷⁷ Parl. Rolls, 632.⁷⁸ Dated 3 July 1468. Rym. Fed. 11. 624. Ab. 237.⁷⁹ W. Wyr. 518.

returned to the Isle of Wight at the end of November, with the noiseless honor of having prevented the attack.⁹⁰

But Jasper, earl of Pembroke, had been active for Henry, his maternal brother. A few French ships had conveyed him to North Wales, in June; and his Welsh friends joined him in sufficient numbers to enable him to besiege and take Denbigh; but he was defeated by lord Herbert's brother, who took the castle of Hardborough, his strong hold, for which exploit the king created Herbert earl of Pembroke.⁹¹

CHAP.
I.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

⁹⁰ W. Wyr. 519.

⁹¹ Ib. 516, 17.

C H A P. II.

WARWICK'S Conspiracies against EDWARD.—ROBIN of Redesdale's Insurrection.—Battle of Hedgecote Field.—EDWARD'S Capture, and Escape.—Battle of Lose-coat Field.—WARWICK'S Flight.—Negotiations with MARGARET.—Return.—EDWARD quits England.

BOOK IV.
1469. THE effects of Warwick's secret conspiracies with Clarence, his own brother Montague, and the discontented nobility and gentry, began now to appear. He did not commit himself immediately by open hostilities. His agents were employed to foment sedition in the country, and a vast popular insurrection arose in the summer of 1469, in the north of England. Sixty thousand men, appointing one whom they called Robin of Redesdale, their captain, appeared in arms;¹ and, dispersing papers specifying the causes of their assembling, began their march to London.²

These articles imply, that the insurrection was not so much directed against the king, as against the new nobility he had raised;³ and also, that it was

¹ Hist. Croyl. 542.

² Our old chronicler, John Stowe, has left us in MS. (not inserted in his history) a copy of Robin's 'Articles and Causes;' and has added to their title, 'which were devised by the duke of Clarence, earl Warwick, and lords Willoughby and Welles, before the field of Lincoln.' Harl. MSS. N^o 543.

³ These articles were, in substance: 'That the king had been too lavish of gifts to the queen's relations, and some others; that thro them he had spent church monies, without repayment; that they had caused him to diminish his household, and charge the commons with great impositions; that they would not suffer the king's laws to be executed but thro them; and that they had caused him to estrange the true lords of his blood from his secret council.' Harl. MSS. ib.

countenanced by the church. For the second article complains of Edward's expenditure of its property ; and the others are directed against the family of the queen. Their petitioning clauses, tho violent against these, are couched in language respectful to the king.⁴ The whole paper contains nothing to shew that it was a Lancastrian rebellion. It is probable, that if the insurgents had succeeded in destroying the queen's family, without Warwick's being discovered to be their secret mover to this end, he would not have projected the restoration of Henry.

Edward, with his habitual promptness and determination, on all great emergencies, went to Norwich, and thro Bury, Walsingham, and Lynn, to Croyland, to explore in person the danger, and to provide the means of surmounting it. He proceeded thence to his castle at Foderingay, where he stayed with his queen a few days, awaiting the arrival of his military succors; while her father and brothers withdrew in alarm to their castles. He marched the forces he could assemble to Newark, but finding that the insurgents trebled his number, and that his friends were backward to assist him, he retreated to Nottingham castle, that Herbert, earl of Pembroke, might join him from Wales, before he took the field against the rebels.⁵ Pembroke hastened to meet him with 7 or 8000 men; but was intercepted in his line of march by a great host of the insurgents, in the field of

CHAP.
II.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

⁴ These were, that the queen's relations, and the others named, who are called seditious persons, might be punished ; and that it would 'like him for ever to be contained by the advice of the lords spiritual and temporal ; and by their authority to ordain and appoint his possessions ; and that, if any but his issue and brethren should presume to take any of his livelihood, they should be punished.' They also required, that the revenue of tonnage and poundage should be employed in keeping the sea.

⁵ Hist. Croyl. 542.

BOOK
IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

1469.
Battle of
Hedgecote
field.

Hedgecote, near Banbury, in Wiltshire.⁶ Lord Stafford had, at the same time, raised 5000 from Somerset and Devon. These two commanders reconnoitred the northern forces who were passing towards Northampton. The insurgents repulsed them; and then, waiting for Warwick and Clarence, encamped on a hill near Banbury. Herbert and Stafford prepared to attack them, but unfortunately for Edward, quarrelling about their lodgings at an inn, Stafford marched off the field with his archers, and left Herbert to bear the brunt of the battle, without their protecting and assisting arm of war. The result was fatal. Tho he distinguished himself as a hardy knight and expert captain, and his brother with his pole-axe twice cut thro the line of his opponents, they were surrounded, overpowered, and taken; and with the usual cruelty of that age, were beheaded the next day.⁷ This victory put the whole kingdom for the time into the power of the northern revolters, and of their secret advisers.⁸ They spread themselves around, and some of the peasantry joining, surprised lord Rivers, the queen's father, and her brother John, in their residence at Grafton, and destroyed them.⁹ Stafford was soon after taken, and suffered. This disaster completed the disaffection to the king; and those who had even joined him, clandestinely left him by thousands.¹⁰

⁶ Hist. Croyl 542, 3.

⁷ Hearne's Frag. 301. Hall, 273, 4. Fifteen hundred of the northerns were killed. Itiner. W. Wyr. p. 122.

⁸ Four thousand Welsh fell; and Pembroke, and other nobles and gentry, were taken, who, by Warwick's secret orders, were beheaded at Northampton. Croyl. 543. It was Pembroke's eldest son who had married one of the queen's sisters; and he himself took a great lead in the royal councils. Contin. Croyl. 551.

⁹ Croyl. 551.

¹⁰ Ib. 543.

Warwick and his friends now assembled their forces, and marched towards the king. His indignation was extreme at finding himself their prisoner; but he had no means of either resisting or resenting. He was taken at a village near Coventry, and brought to Warwick, all his servants having been dismissed. He was led thence to Middleham castle; but the confederated nobles soon found themselves embarrassed with their illustrious captive.¹¹

CHAP.
II.
REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

Warwick had drawn the northern insurgents back over the Trent.¹² They had accomplished his object, in the destruction of part of the queen's family: and the king himself was in his power. But his successes only placed him between two evils; the enmity of those who still liked their king, and the attack of Henry's friends. This dilemma speedily involved him, for sir Humphrey Neville, conceiving from these disturbances, the hope of reviving the old king's party, collected all its adherents about the marches of Scotland. Warwick found that his detention of the king was not popular, and that no military men would move until he was released. The earl's brother, the archbishop of York, to whose custody the king was consigned, still more willingly concurring, Edward was liberated or allowed to escape. The Lancastrians were defeated by Warwick;¹³ and his renewed reconciliation with his sovereign appeared in his appointment in August, to be grand justiciary or commander of Wales, and constable of Cardigan, in addition to his other dignities.¹⁴

The Christmas of 1469 seemed to have ended all

¹¹ Croyl. 551.

¹² Ib. 543. This author says, he was writing this article in the 9th year of Edward, or between March 1469 and March 1470. p. 545.

¹³ Cont. Croyl. 552, 3.

¹⁴ 11 Rym. 647.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.The king
escapes,
and is re-
conciled to
Warwick.

hostilities between these two Yorkist parties. But how could the king forget the destruction of his wife's father and brother, his own captivity, and his still precarious power; or Warwick lose the remembrance, that by such transactions he had precluded all future confidence? There might be peace, but there could not be friendship—and if no friendship, his safety would not survive his power. He had made it impossible for his sovereign and himself to co-exist. Yet he had found, that his own faction was too weak to root up Edward; nor would he gain any advantage, as once seemed to have passed over his mind, by setting up Clarence, because this prince's character was far inferior to his brother's. It remained then only to lead a suspected, depreciated and endangered life, or to combine heartily with the Lancastrian interest, and to restore Henry to the throne. This might be done, especially if the church assisted. To effect this change, Warwick next lent all his politics and power; and the years 1470 and 1471 were distinguished by these extraordinary revolutions, which in other times have turned a Dionysius into a pedagogue, James II. into an exile, and Napoleon Bonaparte into an insulated prisoner.

1470.

On the Shrove-Tuesday of this year, the king met his brother Clarence at their mother's,¹⁵ and a fraternal reconciliation ensued under her parental eye. Warwick took leave, to retire to his ancestral castle;¹⁶ and Edward had such confidence in their fidelity, that when tidings arrived of an insurrection in Lincolnshire, he issued a commission to them both, on March the 7th, to levy troops against the rebels.¹⁷

¹⁵ Fab. 500.¹⁶ Ib. Croyl. 552.¹⁷ 11 Rym. 652. The act passed the 31st of March, states, that the

It was the son of lord Welles whom he had recently beheaded for alleged treason, that commanded the revolt. But the king gave them no time to gather strength: and on March the 12th, without waiting for Warwick, he attacked them with that energy which he always displayed in battle; and so totally defeated them, that they threw away their coats of armor to escape more quickly from his sword; and this circumstance gave a popular name to the field of battle, which took place at Empyngham in Rutlandshire.¹⁸ This anticipating attack was at that time his safety, for Warwick and Clarence were soon on the full march towards him, but rather to have joined Welles, than to have assisted the king. After his victory, Edward proceeded to Grantham; and finding, on March the 20th, that they were advancing, he took the field to meet them, and mustered his people. But as he approached, they discovered their real feelings and intentions to have been hostile, by retreating to Manchester in alarm, lest their treachery should have been known. They solicited lord Stanley to join them,¹⁹ but he refused, and they turned into the west countries, sending proclamations to York, to excite the people against him. Edward reached this city, and created Percy, earl of Northumberland, and Montague, Warwick's brother, a marquis. Indignant at their perfidy, and from want of provisions unable to follow them, immediately, he issued orders from York to arrest them;²⁰

CHAP.
II.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.
12 March.
Battle of
Lose-coat
field.

Warwick
resumes
hostilities.

king, trusting they would have aided him in subduing the insurrections in Lincoln, as they had promised, had authorized them to assemble forces, and bring them to him. Parl. Rolls, 6. p. 233.

¹⁸ Ib. 6. p. 144. Hearne's Frag. 302. Croyl. 553.

¹⁹ 2 Fenn, 37, 9. The act of 31 March 1470, charges Warwick with having treacherously excited Welles to his insurrection. Parl. Rolls, p. 233.

²⁰ Parl. Rolls, 233. Rym. 11. p. 654. 2 Fenn, 39.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV

and commanding his officers to array the counties against them,²¹ he gave them till March the 28th to come in and receive his pardon. The time elapsing without submission, on March the 31st, being at Nottingham, he proclaimed them to be traitors;²² and went himself to Exeter in pursuit, and directed the earl of Kent to marshal the force of Devon and Cornwall to destroy them.²³

King near-
ly taken
prisoner
again.

Warwick's brother, the archbishop of York, now attempted to entrap Edward into their power. The king still believed that he and Montague had no share in the treasons of their brother; and when the prelate invited him to a banquet at his mansion of the Moor near Langley, Edward made the visit in a friendly manner. As they were about to wash their hands before supper, a gentleman, who was afterwards created lord Fitzwalter, privately approached the king, and whispered him to be on his guard, for that one hundred men at arms were ordered to seize and carry him off. The king, with great self-command, continued his friendly converse, and pretended an occasion to retire. As it was not suspected that he knew of any sinister plot, this was permitted: and he immediately caused a good horse to be saddled without any of his enemies being aware of it, and rode off immediately to Windsor.²⁴

Clarence
and War-
wick fly to
France.

Their last hope thus disappointed, Clarence and Warwick prepared to leave the kingdom; in their way they had taken lord Scales and lord Audley, and with the unpardoning ferocity of the age, sent them to be beheaded, when a Dorsetshire gentleman

²¹ Cal. Rot. 315. Rym. 11. p. 655.

²² Parl. Rolls, 6. p. 203. ²³ Rym. 11. p. 656.

²⁴ Hearne's Frag. 302. It places the incident after Easter, as we have inserted it.

CHAP.
II.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

met and released them.²⁵ The fugitive peers went to Calais, but being refused admission by its governor,²⁶ were landed in May, at Honfleur. The admiral of France welcomed their arrival, and they proceeded to Tours, to interest Louis XI. in their favor,²⁷ while some adherents, attempting to join them in the Easter-week from Southampton, were arrested and executed.²⁸

Warwick had been ambassador to France in 1467, and Louis XI. with great sagacity, had, by the most flattering attentions and presents, converted him into a friend.²⁹ Warwick had many secret counsellings with him,³⁰ and from that time maintained with him a constant private correspondence.³¹ Louis, who dreaded Edward's military abilities, and knew that he had publicly urged a descent on France, entered earnestly into Warwick's plans; and sought to effect a reconciliation between the earl and the queen, without which nothing effectual against Edward could be prosecuted. Warwick returned to Normandy, while Louis conducted this negotiation, which he experienced to be a difficulty.³² Margaret was unfortunate—an exile; and had seen all her hopes blossom but to wither: yet she was resentful, high-minded, and resolute. Warwick had dethroned her, and she could neither forgive nor trust him, nor be hereafter governed by him. He required as the

Warwick's
negotia-
tion with
queen
Margaret.

²⁵ Hearne's Frag. 305.

²⁶ i Comines, 245. The duchess of Clarence was brought to bed of a son in the ship. Ib. ²⁷ Hearne's Frag. 303. ²⁸ Fab. 500.

²⁹ Hearne's Frag. 296-8. ³⁰ Ib. 299. ³¹ i Comines, 241.

³² I am indebted for the account of this to the extracts which John Stowe has left us, taken out of the MSS. of some person of eminence in these times; but which, we may presume, came to his knowledge after he had composed his Chronicle, as they form no part of it. In two passages, the author speaks as if living at the period about which he writes. Stowe's extracts are in the Harl. MSS. N° 543. They are intituled, 'Manner and guiding of the earl of Warwick at Angiers, from 15 July to 4 August, on which day he departed from Angiers.'

BOOK IV. conditions of his alliance and support, a complete pardon ; that her only son Edward, should marry his second daughter Ann ; and that she should send a puissant force to England, with her authority. Louis sent for Margaret to Angiers, and urged her to comply with Warwick's terms. But she surprised him by steadily objecting to the very first article. She said, that consistently with her own or her son's honor she might not, and could not, pardon the man who had been the greatest cause of the fall of king Henry and herself; and that from her own heart, she never could be contented with him, nor forgive him. To his second request, she answered, that it would be prejudicial to her interests to take party with him : that she had still many friends, whom she would lose by such a treaty; and therefore she besought the king, that it would please him to leave off from speaking any further of the proposed pardon, amity or alliance.²³ There was a consistency of principle in this refusal, which, tho flowing perhaps from haughty and resentful feelings, yet exhibits that lofty superiority to the baser attractions of selfish interest, which always confers honor and compels respect. Margaret was never greater on her throne than in disdaining these advances of Warwick.

These unexpected answers were conveyed to the mortified earl ; but severe necessity was humbling him ; and he confessed he had deserved them : but suggested, in his own justification, that she and the king, by false counsel had endeavored to destroy him and his friends without cause. He urged that for the great evil will which they had shewn him, he had a righteous cause to labor for their undoing ;

²³ Harl. MSS. N^o 543. p. 168.

and that he had done nothing but what a persecuted and dispossessed noblemen ought to have done. He admitted that he had been the cause of setting up “the king that now is,” but that seeing the evil terms which this prince kept towards him, he would with all his might try to destroy him, and cast him out of the realm : and he asked the king of France to be his surety for his sincerity.³⁴

C H A P.
I I.R E I G N O F
E D W . I V .

Louis XI. who despised all feelings but those of personal advantage, and who built his reign on selfish ends and unprincipled policy, willingly offered himself to Margaret as the pledge of the earl's fidelity. He shewed the queen the great love which Warwick had preserved towards himself, and assured her that he had been more bound and beholden to him than to any other man living :³⁵ an extraordinary confession of a king of France towards an English chief minister. An heroic mind would have scorned such obligations, but Louis XI. was either ignorant of the grander emotions of the human soul, or deemed them only fit for books of chivalry and romance. The result of his interference was, that after many treaties and meetings, and much resistance and the persuasions of her father's friends, and the advice of others, the queen was obliged to relent so far as to pardon him and lord Oxford ; but declared she would not in any wise consent to the desired marriage. She asserted that it was neither honorable nor expedient to her or to her son ; and that she should find a match for him more profitable and more advantageous to a king of England. To convince Louis of this, she produced a

³⁴ Harl. MS. N° 543.³⁵ This corresponds with Croyland's account, that the marriage of Edward's sister with the prince, now duke of Burgundy, the great antagonist of Louis, was one of the points that most offended Warwick.

BOOK IV. letter which she had received from England the preceding week, proposing the plan of a marriage between her son and Edward's eldest daughter.²⁹ Louis would not abandon Warwick; and for fifteen days the struggle lasted with the high-spirited queen. At last the importunities of all around her overcame her persevering magnanimity; and a qualified assent to the marriage was extorted from her: but she exacted the throne to be Anne's dowry. The final agreement was, that the lady should be put immediately into the queen's hands, but that the marriage should not be perfected until Warwick had been with an army over sea to England, and had recovered the kingdom, or the greatest part of it, for king Henry. On these terms she reluctantly consented, especially as Warwick assured the French monarch, that he had letters often from England, which promised him that as soon as he landed in it he should have more than 50,000 fighters at his command. He asked only a few folk, ships, and money, of Louis; and shewed that from his own means, he was providing 2000 French archers, and provisions for 66,000 persons.³⁰

The duke of Burgundy watched anxiously for Edward all these negotiations, and prepared a fleet at Havre to intercept Warwick as soon as he should sail: and his intelligence was so good that he was enabled to inform his brother-in-law of the very part at which his enemies intended to land.³¹

²⁹ The words of the MS. are, ‘ by the which was offered to her son, my lady the princess.’ p. 169. There were no princesses then in England, but Edward's daughters; and of these the eldest only, Elizabeth, could be thought of in such a project as this. The writer expresses himself as if a part of her household; and if so, this was an early plan to unite the houses of York and Lancaster, tho by Edward's deposition.

³⁰ Harl. MSS. N° 543.

³¹ Comines, 279. ‘ The duke of Burgundy was stronger at sea than both Warwick and the king of France; for at Sluys he had seized

Edward sent a lady of quality secretly to his sister-in-law, the duchess of Clarence, to urge her to solicit the duke not to subvert his own family, for the elevation of the Lancastrians ; and not to believe that Warwick intended to make him king, who had now contracted his daughter to the son of Henry. As this lady had been one of the duchess's household, she was admitted to visit her without her object being suspected. Her representations secretly influenced the duke's mind, and he promised to favor the king, when he should be once well settled again on the English shore.²⁰

CHAP.
II.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.Edward's
delusive
confidence.

But altho Edward, by the unvaried success and skilful direction and energy of all his military movements, evinced himself to have the greatest talents for war of any prince then in Europe ; yet, when not called into the martial field, no sovereign seemed more averse to state, policy, business, fatigue or trouble. His natural temper or habits led him to personal and sensual enjoyments, and into these enervating seductions he invariably sank, as soon as victory allowed him to repose. Tho of courage invincible, and with an intellect that evinced the greatest penetration and sagacity in active warfare, the cessation of the conflict terminated his foresight and management : and hunting, hawking, gallantry, dress, and the festive banquet, occupied all his succeeding hours. Being the most beautiful prince then known, his person interested all who beheld him ; and he loved the compliments and the sympathies which he excited. He was fond of being surrounded by the female sex. In his summer hunting, he had tents

upon several great ships belonging to Spain, Portugal, and Genoa, besides many hulks from Germany.' ²⁰ Comines, 246. Ib. 248.

BOOK
IV.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

set up for the ladies, in which he treated them with magnificent splendor.⁴⁰ Instead of being the Ama-dis, he chose to become the Don Galaor of the tales he valued ; unconquerable in battle, but the most dissolute child of luxury afterward : and this taste made his life an historical romance. His very sense of his own abilities misled him. When Burgundy sent him over an exact account of all Warwick's machinations against him, and his own provision of a fleet to counteract the invasion, Edward was so presumptuously confident of his own security and talents, that he derided the wise measure of intercepting his enemies at sea. He only wished them to be landed.⁴¹ There is a folly in vicious conduct, which seems like its natural or appointed destiny.

In all state affairs, the confidence of vanity is the temerity of conceit and pride ; and yet Comines well remarks, that the man who should have then said to him, " Warwick will land, and in eleven days will drive you out, and acquire the supreme power ; " would have been justly deemed insane.⁴² Disaster might have been predicted from his presumption, but not such instantaneous ruin.

Edward had now reigned long enough to shew the people that the largest part of the evils, from the pressure of which they had thrown off their allegiance to Henry, was such as no change of government could remove. New dynasties displace obnoxious men, and put some new principles in action, which may often be beneficial. But the general course and state of society must continue as it was ; and even the advantages from a new direction of counsel, are rarely

⁴⁰ Comines, who knew him, supplies us with these circumstances, and twice mentions his extraordinary beauty, 249, 252.

⁴¹ Com. p. 253.

⁴² Ib.

immediate. The people, therefore, often become as ready to quarrel with their revolutionary sovereign as they had been with their ancient one; and Edward hastened these fluctuations by his effeminate life. This defect divested his name of that commanding veneration which heroic energies, brilliant success, and conceded fame, had attached to it; and left him only the reputation of a self-degrading voluptuary, to whom every one that could command his passions felt himself superior. While he was amusing himself with his unpopular relaxations, in such a time of public disquiet and impending tempest, the ancient nobility, who disdained a Sardanapalus for their king, were sending over earnest invitations to Warwick to make another invasion, with an assurance of their befriending it.

The earl and Clarence sent before them a letter, addressed, “To the worshipful, discreet, and true commons of England,” stating their own injuries, the undue predominance and covetousness of unfit and seditious persons who had the royal ear: asserting, that they bore as fervent a zeal, love, and affection for the crown and commonwealth of England as they ever had; and protesting that they came only to re-establish all good old customs, and to put down falsehood and oppression, and punish their supporters; and to have right and justice indifferently administered, and to redeem the land for ever from the thralldom of all foreign nations.⁴³

Copies of this letter were posted by their partisans on the standard at Cheap, and on several church doors, and other places in London, but were taken down by the mayor as soon as he discovered them.

⁴³ We owe this letter, also, to John Stowe's transcribing industry. Harl. MSS. N° 543.

CHAP.
II.
REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

BOOK
IV.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

In this address, it is manifest that they attempted to delude their supporters into a belief, that they intended no personal attack upon Edward, but only on his obnoxious friends; and it was this deception which dethroned him: for they who would have fought zealously for his person and crown, would not oppose those who they thought only wished to produce his reformation and better government.

On August the 4th, Warwick left Angiers, to begin his embarkation,⁴⁴ and his landing was then daily expected;⁴⁵ but Burgundy's fleet was watching the channel. While the invaders paused for an unmolested opportunity of sailing, lord Fitzhugh began the seconding operations, by rising in rebellion in the north. The king hearing nothing from Montague, to whom he was affectionately attached, left his queen in the Tower, on the eve of a maternal confinement, and went northward to meet the earliest danger,⁴⁶ appointing his brother Gloucester the warden of the northern Marches;⁴⁷ and still believing Montague to be his friend. Fitzhugh fled as he advanced,⁴⁸ but as the king was resting one day in his bed on this journey, the serjeant of his minstrels came in great haste to him and bade him arise, for that enemies were coming to take him, who were but seven miles off. The king received the tidings with astonishment. Suddenly a priest appeared with equal speed, and confirmed the unwelcome yet timely news.⁴⁹ Edward, by these friends, was preserved from a captivity,

⁴⁴ Harl. MSS. N° 543.⁴⁵ 2 Fenn, p. 49.⁴⁶ Hearne's Frag. 306. Fab. 500.⁴⁷ On Aug. 26. Rymer, 11. p. 658.⁴⁸ Fab. 500. Hearne's Frag. 306.⁴⁹ With this curious fact, Hearne's interesting Fragment terminates abruptly and imperfectly.

which would have been soon made synonymous with death.

CHAP.
II.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

At this juncture, an irresistible tempest dispersed the guardian fleet of Burgundy, driving part into Scotland, and part into Holland. Then, suddenly, in an hour's time, changing into serenity, Warwick who had been for some time ready, seized the inviting opportunity, weighed anchor and sailed safe to England.⁵⁰ Before he had landed five days, a large proportion of the neighboring counties flocked to him.⁵¹ He thought now that he was strong enough, and popular enough to throw off the mask; and he published proclamations, declaring Henry VI. to be their true and undoubted king; calling Edward his great rebel and enemy; usurper, oppressor, and destroyer; and assuring the country, that queen Margaret and her son Edward had authorized Clarence, Pembroke, Warwick, and Oxford, to deliver Henry from his imprisonment, and restore him to his crown, and to reform all grievances; and promising a general pardon to all, if they co-operated with the invaders, except certain capital enemies. They ended with commanding all persons between sixteen and sixty to array themselves, and assist them.⁵²

Edward, with great spirit, summoned his military forces immediately around him; and among them the marquis Montague, in whom he so fully confided. While these were collecting at Doncaster, Warwick pressed eagerly on to give him battle, and to overwhelm him before the country could recollect itself, and discover that the invaders came to re-establish Henry, and to throw down Edward.

⁵⁰ Com. 1. p. 249.

⁵¹ Ib. 251.

⁵² John Stowe has also preserved this important document. Harl. MSS. p. 171.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

The king, as he told Comines, was with some of his friends in a fortified house, to which there was no access but by a single bridge. The rest of the forces were quartered in the neighboring villages. But as he sat at dinner, news was brought him, that Montague and some other noblemen were riding on horseback thro his troops, and crying out, "God bless king Henry." The astounding information was too incredible to be believed, yet too tremendous to be neglected. Life as well as dignity hung upon a few moments. If the one was lost, the other might perhaps yet be preserved. He therefore sent a trusty messenger to ascertain the truth, while he put on his armor, and posted a battalion of faithful guards at the bridge, to resist any sudden assault. Lord Hastings was then with him, and Anthony, his queen's favorite brother, who began to think that all was not well. His messenger returned with hurrying speed to tell him, that his treacherous enemies were marching to surround and surprize him. He sprang up—fighting and counsel were out of the question. Instantaneous escape was the only possible safety. He got on his horse before they reached the bridge, and leaving Hastings to make the best arrangement for his really faithful adherents, that was practicable, he rode at full speed to the nearest sea-port. Hastings had time to advise the rest to go in with their submissions to Warwick, but not to forget their old allegiance at a fit opportunity, and then, with others, flew after his master. A sufficient resistance was made at the bridge to obtain the terms they wished, and to gain for the king that interval of time which would ensure his safety. Edward and his friends reached Lynn, and found there two Dutch vessels and an English one,

on the point of sailing. They put off to them immediately without any clothes, but what they were to have fought in, with no money in their pockets, and not one in twenty knowing where they were going. The ships sailed immediately to the coast of Holland, but in their way were descried by several Easterling vessels, then at war both with France and England. Expecting a booty, these hostile strangers bore down upon them. Resistance was hopeless, and outsailing them impossible. There was no alternative but to run ashore, and to risk being drowned. This was courageously done, and they stranded near Alcmaer. The Easterlings followed as close as the depth of water would allow, and then dropped anchor, intending to board them the next tide. Thus Edward's safety still hung on a few hours. But the lord of that province, apprized of his danger, went on board his ship and invited him on shore, commanding the Easterlings to be still. He entertained him and his followers, and at his own expense conducted them safely to the Hague, from which he apprized the duke of Burgundy of his situation, who received the account at first with vexation and uneasiness.⁵³ On a future day the king displayed his gratitude to the lord who had saved him, by creating him earl of Winchester.⁵⁴ Edward was now thrown down from fortune's pinnacle to its base, and by his own weakness and misconduct: but his fall tore him from all that was enervating him; and his native energy of soul, thus emancipated from its debilitating enemies, sprang up into its ancient vigor and activity, and became unwearied, determined, and impatient to renew its former triumphs.

⁵³ Com. 250-5. Edward had nothing to give the master of the ship for his passage, but a gown lined with martins; but he promised him a future liberality. Ib. 254. This flight occurred about Michaelmas day. Croyl. 554. ⁵⁴ 11 Rym. 765.

CHAP. III.

Restoration of HENRY VI.—Re-landing and Progress of EDWARD.

BOOK IV.
1470. WARWICK now proceeded to London unresisted. He entered the metropolis, and on the 6th of October,¹ he and Clarence released Henry from the Tower; and afterwards proclaimed his restoration,² while Edward's queen fled to a sanctuary in which he dared not molest her, and where she brought forth a son, the unfortunate Edward V.³ Thus in eleven days from his landing, he had completed a temporary revolution which must have astonished the most sanguine. From the time of queen Margaret's marriage to the accession of Henry VII. the crown of England appeared like a tennis ball, which the boldest player might strike backwards or forwards as he pleased. Human grandeur seemed to be as mutable, as it was really unnecessary to the personal felicity both of Edward and Henry. The favorite, tho' dissimilar, gratifications of each might have been fully enjoyed without the throne; the one as a devout clergyman: the other as the gay, dissolute, and convivial gentle-

¹ The earliest public acts that have survived to us on this restoration, are dated the 9th of October 1470. Rym. Fed. 661, 2. Stowe's MS. extract, taken 'out Master Bel's boke,' says, that on the 6th of October, the king 'was enlarged out of the Tower, and ful royally brought thro London, to the bishop's palace, by Paule's.' Harl. MSS. N° 545. p. 134.

² This was done on October the 18th. Hearne's Frag, 292. On the 20th of October, the prior of St. John was made treasurer of the exchequer, and on the 22d of October, Montague was appointed governor of the northern Marches. Rym. p. 665.

³ On the 1st of November 1470. Croyl. 554.

man. But they were really little else than the political puppets of their day. It was the interests of others, that alternately elevated and depressed them;⁴ as it was the premature deaths of their parents that made both, English kings.

CHAP.
III.
REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

But Warwick had effected this revolution by deceiving and surprizing the nation. The people wished to correct Edward, but not to re-inthrone Henry, with his unforgiving tho magnanimous queen, and her violent friends. Hence, notwithstanding his brilliant success, Warwick felt no solidity of foundation to rest upon. He could not look around him without seeing, that the spirit of the age and country was against the dislocation he had occasioned. Too many were interested to resist the return of the old establishment, not to make all that he had done precarious and unstable. Hence, he waited for the arrival of Margaret and her auxiliary forces, with an anxiety that he could neither suppress nor conceal. There was a spirit, an intrepidity, and a resolution about Edward, when excited, that kept the public eye in a mysterious expectation of some extraordinary achievement by him. His return, therefore, was talked of as certain: and as he had never struck a blow in vain, something great was anticipated from him. To defeat these hopes, a commission was issued in December to Montague, to put the counties of Nottingham, York, Northumberland, Cumberland, and Westmorland, into military array.⁵ Another was directed to Clarence, Warwick, and Oxford, to prepare against the enemies who meant to invade, and to

⁴ How little royalty is essential to personal felicity, may be inferred from Bonaparte's declaration to O'Meas, that the happiest part of his life was from sixteen to twenty. Voice from St. Helena.

⁵ Dated 21 Dec. 1470, at Westminster. 11 Rym. 676.

VOL. III.

T

BOOK IV. repress all rebels;⁶ and others were sent to the sheriffs of Cambridge, Huntingdon, Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex:⁷ and also into Wales,⁸ to arm the people in those parts, in behalf of the restored king. Policy used all its skill to make heroic adventure a desperado's fool-hardiness.

The queen not coming, the prior of St. John was appointed to seek her in France, and to urge her presence.⁹ Warwick was named admiral of the seas,¹⁰ and Clarence the lord lieutenant of Ireland:¹¹ a truce was made with France for twelve years;¹² and a new mayor of York was chosen.¹³ Thus all the measures of a cautionary and active statesmanship were adopted to protect and perpetuate the new settlement. But it is a common delusion with great men to believe, that human events are commandable by human agency, because they sometimes obey it: the guiding hand that is unseen is, too often for our own happiness, supposed not to exist.

Still Margaret did not arrive with her expected succors, and Edward was known to be earnestly soliciting the duke of Burgundy, to supply him with the means of trying again the chances of his fortune in England. Warwick could not apply the revenues and property of the crown as he thought proper, to strengthen his party; for the prince, or his mother in his name, had expressly limited him by three articles, which fettered his hands till she arrived. These were, that all rewards to lords and others for their good service or sufferings, should be deferred: that a privy council of twelve spiritual and twelve

⁶ Dated 28 Dec. Rym. 677.

¹⁰ Dated 2 Jan. Ib. 679.

⁷ Dated 2 Jan. 1471. Ib. 678.

¹¹ Dated 18 Feb. Ib. 693.

⁸ Dated 30 Jan. Ib. 680.

¹² Dated 16 Feb. Ib. 683.

⁹ Ib. 670.

¹³ Ib. 700.

temporal persons should be established ; and that no great act of government should be done, nor lands, offices, or benefits granted, till it had been proposed and discussed in this council. Warwick was, therefore, now but what Humphrey, the duke of Gloucester, had been, the presiding but the controlled director.¹⁴ Uneasy that Margaret delayed her coming, the earl rode to Dover to receive her, or to accelerate her movements ; but after long tarrying there in vain, he returned, with vexation at her unaccountable delay.¹⁵

CHAP.
III.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

When the duke of Burgundy heard of Edward's escape, he would rather have been told of his death.¹⁶ Offended at the rejection of the advice which would have saved him, undervaluing him for his supineness and luxury, and embarrassed by the dread of Warwick's directing the force of England, in aid of Louis against himself, Burgundy could not determine at first how to receive his expatriated relation. The preparations of the English at Calais to attack him, decided his mind to sign a treaty of alliance with Henry, and publicly to discountenance his humbled competitor.¹⁷ Edward joined his court, and was earnest for his assistance ; but the dukes of Somerset and Exeter, to whom Burgundy had given a kind asylum, counteracted the intreaties of the exiled king.¹⁸

¹⁴ These articles form another of Stowe's transcripts. Harl. MSS. N° 543.

¹⁵ Feb. 502. Adverse weather kept her away. It was so contrary, that she lay at the sea-side, waiting for a wind, from November to April. Ib.

¹⁶ Com. I. 3. c. 5. p. 255. Comines was the person dispatched by the duke of Burgundy to Calais, on the news of this revolution, to open an amicable negotiation with Warwick. Ib. p. 250-8.

¹⁷ Com. I. 3. c. 6. p. 257-9.

¹⁸ Ib. p. 256-60.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

Depreciated for his past imprudencies, and neglected and disliked for his present inutility and compromising interruptions, Edward seemed to be completely deposed : and the political vibrations of Burgundy's mind, might have at last settled in sacrificing him to his immediate interests ; when a new star of hope arose in Edward's dreary night, and from the station of his enemies.

Clarence had powerfully contributed to depose his brother; but solicited as already mentioned, and now beginning to appreciate more justly the consequences to himself, he became dissatisfied with his own success. He found that it deprived his family of all hope of the crown, and sank himself, from the brother of a king, to the condition of a suspected, envied, and dangerous nobleman : too great to be favored ; too near in blood to an enemy to be trusted. By the friends of Henry he was hated and despised—as all men are who break up the ties of natural relationship—and his future instability was feared. It was easy now to convince him, as his own mind was reluctantly beginning to perceive, that he would soon be an object for plunder by the friends of the government, who coveted his possessions : for he saw that he had conciliated no confidence, and obtained no friends, and could not preclude jealousy. He had been used as a temporary instrument to serve the purposes of others, and the accomplishment of these were followed with neglect and jeopardy to himself. Under such impressions, his mother and sisters, the duchesses of Exeter and Suffolk, found him favorable to a reconciliation with Edward. Their interference was supported by the cardinal archbishop, the earls of Bath and Essex, and especially by the unwearied

activity of the duchess of Burgundy.¹⁹ Her affection for Edward was unshaken and ardent, and she carried on a zealous mediation between her two brothers. Some priests were the unsuspected medium who managed this dangerous negotiation; for the vacillations of the different orders of the churchmen, seeking only their own advantage, was at this period continual. Hastings added his intreaties; and the result of their united efforts was, a resolution to join his brother, if he should effectuate a landing in England, and make such a progress in it as would give a reasonable prospect of success to those who should support him.

These assurances, combined with favorable representations of the state of feeling towards him of other gentlemen and places, determined Edward to undertake the perilous enterprise. His high spirited brother, the duke of Gloucester, was not backward to dare the risk; and Hastings, and their other friends, had felt enough of the privations of an exile's life, to prefer all the chances of a romantic adventure to a continuance of their humiliation.

But as England was so completely in the hands of his enemies, and every part where he could land was full of their forces, it was requisite that he should have a sufficient body of men with him to support his landing, and to make his first advances safe, both to himself and his friends. He was not going, like

¹⁹ I am now again indebted to a highly valuable memoir of some person of consideration at this period, which Mr. John Stowe has transcribed, as he says, out of Mr. Flyghtwood's book, the recorder of London. The beginning states, that it was 'compiled and put in this form following, by a servaunt of the kyng's, that presently saw in effect a great part of his exploits, and the residue knew by true relation of them that were present at every tyme.' Harl. MSS. N^o 543. p. 32. Thus we have an authentic account of Edward's extraordinary recovery of his throne. Stowe has made no use of this in his Chronicle.

BOOK IV.

REIGN OF EDW. IV.

Henry IV. to meet a generally discontented and inviting country, and to find a slothful and unwarlike adversary. He knew he had to meet men trained to battle, and who loved it; and who would be as alert as he was, and determined to contest with him to the grave the restoration he desired.

As the duke of Burgundy was collecting his forces to meet his endangering antagonist, Louis XI. in the field, he could not give him, if he had been inclined, any open or effective succors. But his duchess supplied her brother with such resources as she could command.

The duke of Burgundy being deterred, by his managing policy, from any avowed support, carried his duplicity, in that age of Machiavel and Machiavellian statesmanship, so far as to declare publicly, that he would give the king no assistance; and to issue a proclamation, forbidding any of his subjects to accompany him. But he privately sent him 50,000 florins, had three or four great ships equipped for him at La Vere, in Walcheren, and secretly hired fourteen well-armed Easterlings, to transport his followers to England; and to wait fifteen days on the coast, while he tried the issue of his perilous adventure.²⁰

Edward
sails from
Holland.

1471.
March.

About 800 men had followed Edward to the Dutch coast. By the 2d of March 1471, he had collected 2000 brave and resolute Englishmen; and on this day, nearly the anniversary of his accession, he embarked them for his great adventure.

The wind immediately became unfavorable, but so earnest were his feelings in the prosecution of his purpose, that he would not re-land. Nine days they

²⁰ Com. p. 261.

all patiently waited in the ships, lamenting the unchanging breeze, and confined to the harbour: but on the eleventh of March the desired wind occurred. They sailed straight to the coast of Norfolk, and on the next evening came before Cromer.²¹

But lord Oxford had been sent down to watch all the eastern coast, and his letter on the 14th of March, shews, that he was attending this duty, and making exertions and forming plans to repel or destroy Edward.²²

Edward sent a boat on shore for some gentlemen in the neighborhood, to learn from them how the country was disposed towards him. They told him, that all these parts had been filled by Warwick with military forces, and that Oxford was vigilantly superintending them. The duke of Norfolk, from whose friendship he had much hope, and all the gentry of similar feelings, had been ordered to London, and imprisoned; so that it would be certain danger, without hope of benefit, to land in that county. Edward listened to the faithful advice, and stood off to sea.²³

A severe storm now attacked his little fleet, and distressed it for two days and nights. Twelve days had elapsed since he had embarked, and he had not yet landed. This interval gave his antagonists time to make every point he could reach, a scene of danger or ruin.

²¹ Flightwood's Book, Harl. MSS. N° 543.

²² He says, 'I have disposed with me all the power that I can make in Essex and Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, and other places, to be, on Monday next, at Bury; which purpose I intend to observe towards you in Norfolk, to the assistance of you and the country, in case Edward, with his company, had arrived there. And yet I shall do the same, notwithstanding; for if he arrive northward, I cast to follow and pursue him. At Henningham, 14 March (Thursday).' 2 Fenn, 57.

²³ Harl. MSS. N° 543. The wisdom of Edward's avoiding to land in Norfolk, we see from Oxford's preceding letter of 14 March.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.He lands
in Eng-
land.

On the 14th of March, in great peril from the continuing tempest, he got to Humber-head, in his single ship. All the others were dispersed, without any knowlege of their mutual situation. But he resolved to land from the perilous ocean wherever he could, at every hazard ; and finding himself at Ravenspur, on the Humber, which Henry IV. had selected, he disembarked there with lord Hastings, and 500 men, who had accompanied him in his vessel, and calmly waited for tidings of the others. These were actuated by the same spirit of determination and courage. The duke of Gloucester, with 100 men, as soon as he could, landed four miles from his brother. Lord Rivers, and 200 more, reached the shore fourteen miles from him, and the rest at other points as they could reach them. It is not improbable, that this dispersion was beneficial to him. His forces arriving, tho unintentionally, at so many places, made the government less able to calculate his movements, or determine the precise spot to which to direct their opposing armies ; so many landings also multiplied his strength in the popular estimation.²⁴

The king left the coast immediately, and with a small retinue, slept that night at a poor village, two miles from his landing. The next morning, as the tempest had somewhat abated, he was gratified with hearing that his friends were all safe, and were advancing towards him. But the country gave him no gratulations. He was joined by few or none. The supporters of Warwick and Henry had preceded him. Their activity kept the population either faithful to their cause or detached from him—all were in arms, but none to favor him.

²⁴ Harl. MSS. N° 543.

In this state of real danger, it was difficult to determine what were the best measures to be adopted. He was now in the part where his father had been most popular and most powerful, and he had expected that here, at least, he would have been welcomed and strengthened. But he found the people of the country collected in great numbers, in various places, in their battle armor, ready to resist him, and no one moving to his side. The truth was, that whatever might be the private wishes of the Yorkshire men, his enterprise had as yet too much the appearance of rashness, and of probable discomfiture, to induce any to compromise their safety by declaring in his favor.²⁵

But altho he received no support, he found everywhere an unwillingness to injure him. The armed bodies that watched him were contented with standing aloof and looking on. No one offered to annoy him.

In this doubtful state of things, he assembled a council of his wisest companions, to discuss the plan of their future operations. Their principal antagonists were in the southern counties, and about London; and until some blow could be successfully struck at them, no safe footing would be obtained. But his forces were yet only what he had brought with him; and thus unbefriended, were unequal to a conflict with the strength of their enemy; besides, their nearest way to London was thro Lincolnshire, and they could hope for no advantage, but from that

²⁵ Harl. MSS. N° 543. The MS. which Stowe transcribed, and from which we take these facts, was not written by Mr. Flyghtwood: but was a MS. in his possession. It appears, by some papers in the Lansdowne collection, now in the British Museum, that Flyghtwood was recorder in the time of queen Elizabeth. This valuable history of Edward's restoration purports to be written, as we have already mentioned, by a contemporary and assistant of his extraordinary progress.

BOOK IV. surprise which they might gain by superior celerity.
REIGN OF EDW. IV. Yet, as to reach the capital with speed they must traverse Lincolnshire, it was necessary again to take shipping, and cross the Humber. Their late tossings on the sea had, however, given them an abhorrence of the water; and it was also suggested, that any re-embarking would be misconstrued into flight, and thus extinguish all courage in their friends, who, tho' yet tranquil, were in many parts of the country waiting only to see a determined spirit, and a successful progreas, to come forward on their side.*

They concluded their deliberations by resolving to press boldly on towards York. As they found the nation, even in the districts least unfriendly to them, not disposed to renew any quarrel about the crown, it was also determined that Edward should at this time make no pretensions to that. Hence, all his followers were directed to declare, that he limited his wishes to be again the duke of York, and to be reinstated in his paternal inheritance. The diffusion of this moderate claim satisfied the country, and tho' various bodies of armed men, six or seven thousand in number, were in different places assembled against him, at one part under a warlike priest, and in others under the local gentry, yet none moved to attack him. He passed without molestation to Beverley, on his road to York; but Hull being a strong town, and a convenient sea-port, in case of failure, he sent a detachment to secure it. Its commander, however, shut the gates and refused them admittance. Edward was not disheartened by this repulse, and moved on the high road towards York.

As he passed along, he found the same undecided

* Harl. MSS. N° 543.

and discouraging public feeling. Great companies of men assembled in array, to watch his steps, but kept out of sight, and made no hostile movement. Tho it was obvious that they would be his friends, if he succeeded, it was no less probable that they would become his foes and destroyers on his retreat, if he met with any disaster. The known hardness and desperate courage of himself and his companions contributed to deter them from any attack; and it is intimated, that judicious distributions of money to their leaders were also not unavailing.²⁷

CHAP.
III.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

He came in sight of York on Monday the 18th of March. At a distance of three miles, the recorder of the city, a friend of the Lancastrians, came out to deter him from approaching it. This wily politician assured him, that he would not be suffered to enter it, and would be undone if he attempted it. Edward was perplexed at this disappointment; but a short deliberation was sufficient to decide his correct judgment. He felt that he had advanced too far to recede—destruction was certain if he retreated. Boldness and vigor only could now save him; and he declared, that he would pursue, with unsheaken constancy, what he had began, and rather abide what God and good fortune would give him, tho the issue was uncertain, than fall by defect of courage, or live to sustain reproach. He determined rightly. No enterprise like his should be attempted without a settled resolution to persevere thro every difficulty and discouragement, and to conquer or die: without this determination, no adventurer can sufficiently assure his supporters, sound the depths of his own resources, put the real strength of his opponents to the full

²⁷ Harl. MSS. N^o 543.

BOOK
IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

proof, or obtain the benefit of all the circumstances that may arise. Thus fixed in heart and will, Edward bade his troops move on.

His courageous decision was rewarded within a mile of the city, by meeting two of the inhabitants, who came out to tell him, that if he aspired only to his father's dignity and possessions, he would be received with friendship, and suffered to pass forward. The artful recorder attempted to contradict their assurances; but Edward suspected his sincerity, and advanced to the city gates.

He there halted his little army, and, with only sixteen selected friends, entered the walls. The heads of the city were assembled near the entrance, but he gallantly put himself into their power, and his confidence gratified them. He stated his limited wishes, and was heard with friendly attention. They admitted all his company for that night, refreshed them with all necessaries, and after their dinner, on the following day, the 19th of March, permitted them to depart for Tadcaster. None joined them, but none molested.²⁰

Edward had as yet gained nothing either to secure his safety or to effectuate his restoration. It was a severe disappointment to find only neutrality where he had most expected aid. It was clear that he had no one but Clarence to rely on, and yet even his co-operation was not likely to be made, if all the rest of the country kept away. Still, however, he must dare the event, tho the prospect was gloomy. He

²⁰ On this day, (19th March) lord Oxford issued letters from Bury, to several gentlemen of the country he commanded, stating, that he had received tidings of Edward's landing in the north, and calling on them to meet him in full array, at Lynn, on the next Friday, (the 22d) to proceed to Newark. 2 Fenn, 59-61.

had no choice but to plunge into greater danger. The farther he advanced, the more impossible became retreat. Life without success was indifferent to them all. A calm, dignified, and most resolute courage was the consequence of this situation : for personal bravery was the characteristic of the house of York.

From Tadcaster, on the next morning,²⁹ they moved to Wakefield and Sendall, leaving Pomfret castle on their left.

Here they approached a point of great peril. The marquis Montague was in this castle. He had been advertised by his brother Warwick of Edward's landing, and had been ordered to oppose him. The subsequent events proved that Montague stood firm in Warwick's interest. It was therefore expected that he would advance to annihilate Edward.

The movements from Pomfret castle were watched with the greatest anxiety by the daring but insecure invaders ; but as they marched on, their scouts brought no alarm of any forces quitting it. Edward gave the marquis no time to decide any doubt or hesitation, or to collect more strength. He passed rapidly on to Doncaster, and from thence without pause to Nottingham, wisely judging, that his best course was at once to throw himself into the heart of the country, to feel its general pulse before he was intercepted ; and correctly perceiving, that to elude any attack, before this experiment was made, was the surest means of future victory.³⁰

The whole nation afterwards, when it came to reflect on this period of wonders, was astonished at the inactivity of Montague, at a juncture so critical. But a contemporary informs us, that the rapidity of

CHAP.
III.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

²⁹ Harl. MSS. March 20.

³⁰ Harl. MSS.

BOOK IV.
REIGN OF EDW. IV.

Edward's movements brought the adventurers into his vicinity before he had forces enough to encounter them. He saw that a majority of the population was in their favor, but would not join them till they had gained some great advantage; and he knew that from their unquestionable bravery and martial skill, no hasty attack would avail. He was, therefore, afraid of injuring his own cause by encountering them only to be defeated. He was also alarmed by the visible neutrality of the earl of Northumberland, whose followers had permitted Edward to pass unassailed. He saw no one whom he could rely on beyond his own knights and retainers, and he hesitated to compromise his brother's safety by a precipitate battle, which Edward would have willingly fought with his powers alone: because the first victory of an invader always doubles his chances of future success. It seemed also wisdom to let Edward bury himself in the centre of the island, in which all the Lancastrian forces could be assembled to surround him. Hence, as he had not the means of certainly preventing his advance, he let them pass unmolested; but prepared vigorously to join the government armies, with his collected strength.²¹

But however prudent his conduct seemed, or may have been, it was auspicious to Edward. It kindled a popular belief, that Montague, as well as Northumberland, secretly befriended him. It was an easy and obvious inference to all, that the invaders could not have passed so far into the country without annoy-

²¹ In judging of Montague, we may remember, what the Fragment mentioned, that Edward *entirely loved him*. p. 306. This feeling, and some remorse for his former treachery to such a man, may have contributed to make the marquis hesitate, till the critical moment of possible interception had passed.

ance, and would not have ventured, if they had not been secretly and powerfully favored. The hesitating, therefore, now began to decide. Some few, tho' not so many as had been hoped, joined them in their march to Nottingham; but at this town, two knights came openly to him with six hundred men, and thus shewed that the tide of public opinion was beginning to flow towards him.

CHAP.
III.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

Yet this addition afforded but small means for reconquering the crown of England. It did not raise all their force to 3000 men, and the whole risk of the enterprise was yet before them. But it relieved that solicitude of mind, which the bravest men cannot but feel, in attempting a grand adventure against superior power; and which Edward, his undaunted brother, and the high-souled Rivers and Hastings experienced in the dangerous march from Ravenspur to Nottingham, amid arrays of armed men, coldly looking on without aiding, and, by their cautious avoidance, silently proclaiming their belief of a hopeless failure.²²

From Nottingham, Edward, while he rested here a few days, sent confidential persons to scour all the adjacent country, and ascertain what forces were collecting against him. Some found, that at Newark, on the left of their rear, the duke of Exeter, lord Oxford, and others, had assembled 4000 men from the eastern

²² Harl. MSS. So judicious were Edward's movements, and so rapid, that it does not appear that they were known to the government in the metropolis, till near the 25th of March, the eleventh day after his landing; and he was by that time in the heart of England. It is on the 25th of March, that the government order was issued at Westminster, stating, that Edward had newly entered the realm: and commanding Clarence, Pembroke, and Warwick, to convoke the king's subjects against him and his adherents. Rymer 11. p. 705. The next order is dated the 27th of March, also stating, that he had landed with rebels, Flemings, and Burgundians. p. 706.

BOOK
IV.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

counties. This was a dangerous force, if it had been wisely commanded; but such was Edward's reputation for activity of movement, and resolute gallantry, that the very appearance of his scouts raised a conviction that his whole army was approaching: and as report had magnified its amount, the noble leaders became afraid of a surprise, and at two in the morning, tho' his most vindictive enemies, fled with precipitation out of the town, abandoning part of the troops they had brought, and discouraging all their friends, by a panic so disgraceful.

They had not calculated wrongly on Edward's conduct; as soon as he was apprised of their being at Newark, he moved immediately towards the town, and was within three miles of it when he heard of their flight. Satisfied with their dispersion, he returned to Nottingham, emboldened now to move immediately against Warwick, his most dreaded adversary, and who, he was here informed, had left London, and was embodying an army at his town of Warwick.²³

Rapidity of movement, that he might attack before Warwick could overpower him with numbers, became now his wisest policy: and as Edward never wanted a quick-sighted judgment, when he was really in action, he took the nearest way thro' Leicester, to confront, immediately, the man who at this moment was the acting sovereign of England.

²³ Harl. MSS. One great cause of Edward's successful advances was, that the troops on which the government most relied were stationed on the eastern and southern sea coasts, to guard them against Edward's invasion; but, by the celerity, secrecy, and skilful direction of his progress, he was approaching the metropolis before the orders to move elsewhere could reach them. Hence, all that Warwick could do was to wait till they could join, and to let his adversary get to his capital unmolested.

The gallantry of this conduct disconcerted Warwick: and, tho he had a larger army than the king, he was afraid of risking it against a man whose military talents he well knew. Hence, as Edward approached, he withdrew, without fighting, to the stronger fortifications of Coventry.

This conduct first gave Edward an assured footing in the country. It was such a confession of personal inferiority, of Edward's merit, and of his re-ascending power, that it removed from many minds, all fear of the consequences of supporting the house of York. Three thousand trusty men, whom the messengers of Hastings had urged, now unhesitatingly joined him at Leicester, and made his forces between 6 and 7000 men. With these, on the 29th of March, he marched straight to Coventry, and defied the earl to end the quarrel by a personal combat. Warwick refused to accept the challenge. Three days Edward marched up to the walls, repeating the defiance, and exciting the enthusiasm of his friends, by his intrepid demeanor. As often the earl declined the martial invitation.

Edward, wisely avoiding a siege, drew his forces to the town of Warwick, where he was now received as king. He felt that he had already more than half reconquered his crown; and he issued proclamations, resuming his royal dignity, and encouraging his adherents.²⁴

Mutual friends now daily interfered, to effect a reconciliation between him and Warwick. The king promised him both pardon and liberal favors; but Warwick would not listen to the amicable overtures.

CHAP.
III.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

²⁴ Harl. MSS. Croyland mentions that the earl did not dare to fight with the king at Coventry. p. 554.

**BOOK
IV.**

**REIGN OF
EDW. IV.**

This state of things removed all scruples from the mind of Clarence, and he advanced to join the king with 4000 followers. Edward marched with all his array, three miles out of Warwick, to meet him; received him with banners displayed, and affectionate embraces. The trumpets and minstrels sounded their congratulating music, and the united forces marched into Warwick, amid the general acclamations. Clarence also attempted to induce Warwick to abandon the house of Lancaster. But the earl saw that he had done too much to be cordially forgiven or safely trusted again; and had also too deeply, of his own seeking, pledged himself to the French king, in behalf of queen Margaret, to abandon her cause without indelible dishonor. The negotiations therefore failed, and Edward, after another display of defiance before Coventry, on the 5th of April, marched onwards to London, while Exeter, Montague, Oxford, and others, united themselves soon afterwards, with Warwick, in his rear.²⁵

On the 6th of April, being Palm-Sunday, the king paused to hear divine service, with great devotion, at Daventry, and thence proceeded to Northampton, where he was cordially received. He took the direct road to the metropolis; but with the precaution of guarding his rear by a good band of spears and archers, in case his enemies had attempted to follow him.

The English noblemen who were the most zealous for the house of Lancaster, and the most confided in by the queen,—the duke of Somerset, his brother the Lancastrian marquis of Dorset, and Courtney the earl of Devon,—had been in London when

²⁵ Harl. MSS.

CHAP.
III.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

Edward landed. But, apprised that queen Margaret, with her son, was coming, with lord Wenlock, the countess of Warwick, the prior of St. John, and fresh supplies out of France, to consolidate Henry's restoration, Somerset and his friends had left the capital to raise an army from the western counties, and join her, while Warwick operated in the inland districts. The queen and her party entered their ships at Harfleur, on the 24th of March, when Edward was at or near Nottingham. But at this critical moment, on which the fate of both the rival houses hung, adverse winds and tempestuous weather kept her for twenty most important and irrecoverable days, still on the coast of France, while the anxious and impatient Somerset was chiding the tantalizing delay, and imploring the deaf winds to be propitious. It was not till the 13th of April, Easter-eve, that they could leave their French port: nor did they land in England till the 14th, Easter-Sunday, a day on which the most fatal change of their fortunes was destined to begin.*

It was in the absence of all these great noblemen, that Edward, on the 9th of April, drew near London, in which Henry, his inefficient competitor, was then residing, in that brief show of royalty which his unambitious mind did not covet, and had never valued. Warwick had not been inattentive to this movement. He had left the metropolis under the care of his brother, the archbishop of York, and sent to him, and to the mayor, earnest letters to rouse the citizens against Edward. He only asked them to keep him out for three days, and promised to come with adequate power to chastise the bold attempt.

* *Harl. MSS. p. 38.*

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

The archbishop, in obedience to his brother's mandate, assembled, at St. Paul's, all their military friends, but found them not to exceed six or seven thousand men. To kindle the fire of loyalty in the city, he put king Henry on horseback, and made him ride in state thro Cheapside to Wallbrook, and back to St. Paul's, that the sight of the son of their favorite, the fifth Harry, might rouse the population to befriend him. But the rulers of the city beheld the pageantry and its appeal without emotion. They took possession of the gates, and evinced no friendly spirit to the Lancastrian cause.³⁷ Edward that night reached St. Albans; and Henry's friends, perceiving that their real supporters were few, and those who were adverse to them were numerous, did not attempt to maintain their important position for the small time which Warwick had asked; but deserted their loyalty and honor, and suffered the mayor and aldermen, without a struggle, to keep the city for king Edward. The archbishop took the lead in this treachery to Henry, and sent privately to Edward, requesting pardon, and promising submission and obedience. Forgiveness was promised him, and all resistance was abandoned. The Tower of London was that night taken possession of by Edward's friends; and on the next day, the 11th of April, he came in person, and rode to St. Paul's, and to the bishop's palace. There the unfaithful prelate met him, with king Henry in his hand, whom he traitorously surrendered to his rival. Edward proceeded

³⁷ Harl. MSS. Fabien mentions, on the archbishop's exhibiting Henry in this manner to the people, that 'this rather withdrew men's hearts, than otherwise.' p. 503. The meek and impassive Henry was, at this moment, a complete contrast to the wonderful energy and talent of Edward, in his masterly march from Ravenspur to London.

to Westminster abbey, and offered his earnest thanks for his surprising train of success. In twenty-eight days from his landing at the Humber, he had reached his metropolis, regained his crown, and captured his competitor, without even one interrupting battle. He visited immediately his queen, who was still at her sanctuary in the abbey, and she presented him with the prince to whom she had given birth in his absence.³⁸

CHAP.
III.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

³⁸ Harl. MSS. The archbishop was sent to the Tower. Of him Paston writes, ‘ Nevertheless, he shall do well enough. He hath a pardon, and so we hope well.’ 2 Fenn, 65.

C H A P. IV.

Restoration of EDWARD IV.—Battle of Barnet—Queen MARGARET lands—Marches of each Party—Battle of Tewkesbury—Falconbridge attacks London—King HENRY's Death.

BOOK IV. EDWARD was not yet to indulge in that repose of enjoyment which he loved. He had placed himself on the vantage ground, and had obtained new means of maintaining it: but the battles remained to be fought, and the victories to be gained, that were to decide whether the white or the red rose was to continue on the throne of England. Warwick, who had now embodied the forces he thought sufficient, was marching on to the capital, true to his promise; and Edward on the next morning, Good-Friday, summoned a hasty council to deliberate on the most advisable measures to withstand an attack, whose issue no one could as yet foresee.

12 April.

Warwick was advancing with confidence that one of two things must happen. Either the citizens would be keeping the king at bay, and then his army would place Edward between two attacks, that would probably ensure his destruction; or, if the city had received him, the usual solemnities of Easter would be so occupying his adherents, that it would be an easy matter to surprise and overwhelm them.

But the most prominent qualities of Edward's mind were intrepidity, promptitude and soldierly judgment. His spies had completely watched Warwick, and

communicated his movements. Hence, on Easter-eve, the 13th of April, Edward quitted London, to fight the battle out of the streets of the metropolis, taking Henry with him.¹

He marched to Barnet, ten miles from London, that afternoon; where his out-riders met those of the earl, and drove them thro the town, and advanced far enough to see the army of Warwick drawn up in array by the side of a hedge. The king, apprized of this, would not let one of his men remain in the town, but proceeded thro it into the fields beyond, as close to his adversary as it was safe to lodge.

It was now quite dark. He could not see precisely how or where his opponents were embattled before him: but he took his station at a venture, at a point which he thought sufficiently near for his future operations; and soon found that it was much closer than he had supposed or intended.

He meant to have rested immediately in their front; but the obscurity caused him to mistake the extent of their position: and without knowing what he had done, he placed his troops on one side only of their's, outstriking their left, but leaving none opposed to their right. He commanded silence to be kept, that Warwick might know none of his movements.

Both parties had artillery; but Warwick much more than the king, and, fortunately for the latter, had placed it in his right wing. Here, supposing that Edward's left was before it, he ordered the gunners to cannonade it all night. This would have

CHAP.
IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

13 April.

¹ Harl. MSS. N° 543. Croyland intimates, that Warwick expected to surprise Edward at his devotions, on Easter Sunday. p. 554.

BOOK IV. occasioned a serious loss to the king, and have dis-
REIGN OF EDW. IV. couraged his troops against the next day's encounter, if they had been placed as the king designed: but his miscalculation of Warwick's position prevented this disaster. Having put no part of his army in this quarter, all Warwick's night cannonade was fired at nothing. Edward, as the flashes of the guns illumined by fits the gloom of midnight, saw the advantage of his unintentional error, and, to prevent Warwick from discovering it, reiterated his orders for the most profound silence. Warwick was thus prevented from knowing that his enemies were so near, or how they were really stationed; otherwise, as he appears to have been superior in numbers, as well as in artillery, a night attack, in a right direction, might have been fatal to the king.²

Battle of
Barnet,
14 April,
1471.

On the morning of Easter-Sunday, the 14th of April, Edward was in the field arranging his troops, between four and five o'clock. A great mist covered both armies. Each divided his force into three divisions, with reserves. Montague and Oxford led on the earl's right wing, Somerset his centre, and he himself, with the duke of Exeter, directed the left. Edward intrusted his right to his brother the duke of Gloucester, altho then but nineteen, and his left to lord Hastings, and stationed himself in his centre.³

The mist continued so thick that neither party could see the other, except at intervals. But the king, desirous, from his inferiority in cannon, and from his confidence in his troops, to make it a close and personal combat, advanced his banners, blew his trumpets, and, after a few shot, joined immediately in a conflict of hand to hand.

² Harl. MSS. N° 543.

³ Ib. Hall, 295, 6.

His misconception of the position of Warwick, which had saved his army in the night, began now to operate to his disadvantage ; for the earl's right so greatly outflanked his left, that when they came into actual contact, Hastings found himself nearly surrounded by a force which no valor could repel. His wing fought with vigorous courage, but was at length broken by Oxford's superior numbers, and was driven out of the field. Many fled to Barnet, and some to London, spreading every where the news that the king was defeated and ruined.⁴

CHAP.
IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

The mist prevented the rest of both armies from knowing the discomfiture of Edward's left wing : hence, neither the one was encouraged by it, nor the other disheartened. But the king, being in the centre, became first acquainted with it, and before advantage could be taken of it, made a vigorous charge on Warwick's centre, with such irresistible violence, that he bore down all before him. In vain Somerset attempted to check him. All that opposed were cut down ; and as he pierced the lines, he doubled on each side on those who yet stood, and put the earl's main battle into general confusion. At the same time his right, under Gloucester, having also outflanked the earl's left, by the accident of their position, was now reaping the full advantage of this circumstance. Warwick himself was here, and, by having chosen this part, had probably meant to have made it his destructive attack on Edward's line ; yet courage

⁴ Harl. MSS. Fabian also mentions this fact, and adds, that if Oxford's men had kept their array, and not fallen to rising, the victory would have been to their party. p. 504.

⁵ Of this fog, it is amusing to read in Fabian, ‘ of the mists, and other impediments, which fell upon the lord's party, by reason of the incantations wrought by friar Bungay as the same then went, me list not to write.’ p. 504.

BOOK IV. and despair were ineffectual to preserve his wing from ruin. His centre being penetrated at the same time that he was thus surrounded, nothing but a judicious conduct of his successful right could have saved him. But on Oxford's returning from his pursuit of the king's left, it is stated that the badge of his men, a star with streaming rays, being mistaken to be the king's forces, whose device was the sun, he was received with a discharge of arrows, from that part of Warwick's yet standing centre which they approached. At first, a conflict as supposed antagonists, and afterwards, a mutual belief of treachery, shook this part of Warwick's line into confusion. His whole army was thus, from these various causes, thrown into total rout. The battle had been so severe, that all the leaders of both sides were compelled to exert themselves individually as soldiers, as well as commanders. Warwick fell fighting desperately on foot. His brother, the marquis, also perished. Exeter was struck down, and left for dead, but Oxford and Somerset escaped. Edward lost two lords, and the heir of another. The battle was short, tho' furious, for it had only lasted three hours. The king's forces did not exceed 9000 men.⁶ His loss was less than 2000. Warwick's slain were 7000, and, from this number, his army must have been greatly superior

" Harl. MSS. Croyland calls this a 'mirabilis,' 'inspirata,' and 'gloriosa' victory. p. 555. Sir John Paston, who had fought in it on Warwick's side, writes of it, on the Thursday afterwards: 'God hath shewed himself marvellously like him that made all, and can undo again when him list; and I think, that by all likelihood shall shew himself as marvellous again, and that in short time, and, as I suppose, oftener than once, in cases like this.' 2 Fenn, 67. He alludes here to the next impending battle, for he says, ' Margaret is verily landed, and her son, in the west country, and I trow, that to-morrow, or else the next day, the kyng Edward will depart from hence to her ward, to drive her out again.' 67.

CHAP.
IV.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

to Edward's.⁷ It seems singular that the king should have been attended from the metropolis by so small a host. But the determined advance of Warwick may have made the citizens cautious of joining either party, till some deciding victory had occurred : and Edward's reliance on his own military skill, and on the resolution of his well-selected soldiers, made him always desirous to fight a pitched battle, whenever he could fix his adversary to an assailable position.

The death of Warwick released both parties from an ambitious and restless spirit, too powerful to be a peaceful subject to any sovereign, yet compelled always to remain one. He had deposed and re-inthroned Henry. He had crowned and banished Edward, alternately supporting either, as his irascibility actuated him. The Lancastrians hated him, even while he re-established them, and the Yorkists could trust or respect him no more. He had been too guilty, too absurd, and too mischievous, to live with any future credit or comfort to himself, or to any others. It cannot be truly said, that death is a boon to any but the pious ; yet life to Warwick could only have been a succession of remorse, spleen, contempt, aversion, misanthropy, and despair, unless he could have submitted to the penitence and self-humiliation of a La Trappe : but there was nothing in his character which had such a tendency ; and this celebrated king-maker and un-maker, finding victory wrenched from his grasp, seems, like one of his most

⁷ Harl. MSS. Paston, whose brother was wounded with an arrow on his right arm, beneath the elbow, in the battle, and who was himself in it, after mentioning Warwick's and Montagu's death, on the one side, and lords Say and Cromwell on Edward's, says loosely, ‘and other people of both parties, to the number of more than a thousand.’ 2 Fenn, 65. But the nature and duration of the struggle make the numbers in the text, taken from the contemporary MS. more probable.

BOOK IV. impetuous assailants, fourteen years afterwards, erring like him from an unprincipled ambition, to have sought that fate in the field which had now become his only good. Hence, like Richard in his last scene, whom he was then confronting, he dismounted, and fought on foot, both as an example, and in despair. Nature, at length exhausted or dismayed, abated his resolution, and began to shrink from its catastrophe. He “was slain somewhat flying.”⁸

REIGN OF EDW. IV.

As the battle was over before nine in the morning, the king only waited at Barnet to refresh his troops, and the same day returned to London. His victory having made loyalty safe, he was now received with warm acclamations: and they who had left him to dare his fate, with the 9000 men he had brought with him, gratulated him as a conqueror, with a popular joy, which his policy or vanity alone could welcome. He rode straight to St. Paul’s, and is described to have paid his grateful devotions with humble thankfulness.⁹

The revolt of Warwick had divided the friends of the house of York. His death re-united them, and left again only two parties in the country: those who wished the new dynasty, and those who preferred the old one. Warwick’s defeat had not much weakened the Lancastrian side. He had fought his battle chiefly with his family power, and the resources of the house of Lancaster were still nearly entire. Hence, Edward had yet to make the decisive struggle with them; and

⁸ Harl. MSS. Lord Oxford wrote, after this battle, ‘I am escaped myself, and suddenly departed from my men, for I understand my chaplain would have betrayed me. Send me in all haste all the ready money ye can make, and as many of my men as can come well horsed, and in divers parcels.’ He was still sanguine of Henry’s success. ‘Be of good cheer, and take no thought, for I shall bring my purpose about now.’
⁹ Fenn, 71. ⁸ Harl. MSS.

this was felt to be a dangerous and uncertain crisis. Few, therefore, of the nobility and gentry yet chose to commit themselves by joining with him. It was known that queen Margaret was on the seas, with great foreign supplies, and that her friends were numerous and sanguine in all the west and south. Edward found, that he must expect no secure reign or cordial attachment, till this last hope of the red rose was encountered and defeated ; and looked with anxiety to discern in what quarter the storm would appear, or could be most wisely confronted.

CHAP..
IV.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.Landing
of Queen
Margaret.

The queen, baffled by adverse winds and tempests, had often landed and re-landed at Harfleur, as the weather fluctuated ; but it did not permit her to sail till Easter-eve ; and on the next day, while Warwick was fighting at Barnet, she landed at Weymouth. Her companion, the countess of Warwick, first reached England in her ship at Portsmouth ; but hearing there of her husband's fate, she resolved not to join the queen, passed secretly into the new forest, and weary of the sanguinary times, took shelter in the abbey of Beaulieu. The queen, with her lords and partisans, went from Weymouth to Cerne Abbey, where the duke of Somerset, the earl of Devon and others, came to her. She did not hear of the defeat at Barnet till the next day, and was greatly affected. But her counsellors assured her that it was no disadvantage. Their party, instead of being feebler, was made stronger by Warwick's fall. They had no doubt but that they could assemble so great a puissance of people in various parts, that it would not be in Edward's power to repress them.¹⁰

It does not appear that they had reasoned erroneously. As Warwick had displayed no peculiar

¹⁰ Harl. MSS.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

talents as a commander, his personal loss was no evil. His moral influence in the country had ceased: he had been a master whom no one dared to affront, or could manage, and as such he was an incumbrance to wise council, not an assistant. Many a Lancastrian abhorred him too much to serve under him; and his vacillations precluded that confidence, which desires to stake life and fortune firmly on the venture it undertakes, and which now both of the conflicting parties desired and needed. It is probable, that the calculations of the Lancastrians would have been verified by the issue, if Edward had not been the ablest captain at that time existing. He had never lost a battle, however inferior in number, and few had fought more; and all his movements, from his debarkation on the Humber, to the complete re-establishment of his power, display a military sagacity, a watchful thought, activity, decision, quick and correct judgment, intrepidity and energy, which only required a larger field of enterprise to rank him with those great conquerors, whom the enthusiasm, rather than the wisdom of mankind, have so lavishly, yet perhaps to their own prejudice, so continuously admired.

The queen's council determined to begin their operations in the district they were inhabiting. Zealous and able men were therefore sent, over Somerset, Dorset, and part of Wilts, to array the people, who had been sometime preparing, and to collect also those of Devon and Cornwall. As in all these counties their friends had been long training, an army was speedily assembled. They made Exeter their first point of rendezvous, where the queen and her son Edward joined them.

Edward saw this preparing attack to be of the

most formidable character. He dispatched his friends to get fresh men from all quarters, and providing an ample supply of artillery, which he projected to make one of his principal means, he left London for Windsor, on the 19th of April, and ordered all his forces to unite in that town.¹¹

CHAP.
IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

He observed, that his opponents were at present in an angle of the island, and to attain their object, must make one of three movements. They must either march direct thro Salisbury to London; or along the sea coast of Hampshire, Sussex, and Kent, if they felt strong enough to bring him to an immediate battle; or if they doubted the expediency of this, and resolved first to combine a more overpowering force, they must move northward into Cheshire and Lancashire, receiving all the reinforcements in their way, which were preparing for them in Wales, by Jasper earl of Pembroke. The king's first point of difficulty was, to penetrate which of these measures they intended; for if, to defeat the last, he had marched hastily into the north, they would have reached London in his absence; and if, to guard that vital part, he kept too near his capital, it would be impossible to prevent them from uniting all their northern resources. His determination and his interest were, to bring them to battle as soon as possible, whatever was their numerical force, as that would be only augmented by delay; and he found the country to be yet so mistrustful of the issue, that few of the gentry had moved to his assistance. The balance of the two houses still hung too even for the large proprietors to risk confiscation and attainer, by taking part with him. His exile had so astonished his old supporters,

¹¹ Harl. MSS.

BOOK IV. that its paralyzing effect had not yet gone off. A throne so easily lost and won, was too unstable to be linked to. Edward had, therefore, with him, all the army he could now expect. It was select and determined, but not numerous; and the sooner he could bring it into action with his antagonists, the greater were his chances of success.

REIGN OF EDW. IV.

But the Lancastrian leaders were as aware of the situation and interests of both parties as he was. They saw that they placed him in a dilemma; and they prepared to execute either of the two possible plans, of marching to London or to the north, according as his movements opened the greatest advantage.

Both parties were thus watching, and desirous to mislead and out-general the other; and that which committed the first fault, would probably lose the crown they so mortally struggled for.

The king made Windsor castle his primary position, as the most convenient spot for proceeding from, either to the west or north. It gave him also the opportunity, in the celebration of the feast of St. George, to excite the warlike spirit of his army. He reasoned, that if the friends of Henry should finally determine to go northward to increase their forces, they must pass the Severn, either at Gloucester, Tewkesbury, or more remotely at Worcester. He therefore kept his eye on those places as his future points of march, if he should really find that they abandoned the plan of surprising the metropolis.¹²

The queen's generals perceived, that to reach London, they must draw him further from it: and to join their friends in the north they must attract his

¹² Harl. MSS.

attention elsewhere, and create an uncertainty in his mind as to their ultimate object. With this view, they sent parties in various directions : some from Exeter to Shaftesbury, as if they aimed at the coast line of movement : some to Salisbury, as if the shortest road to London was the way selected ; while they moved their main body to Taunton and Glastonbury, and from thence to Wells, ready to dart forward, to such of these two great ends, as the king's motions should leave vacant. Still further to perplex him, they sent advanced parties to Yeovil, and gave the people to understand that they meant to advance by Oxford and Reading to London, or to surprise the king at some great advantage.

But Edward was not to be deluded from his steady guard. If they came to seek him, they were welcome, as he desired a speedy battle more than they did. Hence no threat of attacking him, could alter his measures. His scouts were alert in hovering about their head quarters: and when he heard of their thinking of Oxford, he began to suspect that their determination was settling for the northern movement. He therefore left Windsor, the 24th of April, the morning after St. George's day, and proceeded leisurely to Abingdon, quite prepared to counter-march on his capital, if his change of position should tempt them to resume that point of action. He did not enter Abingdon till the 27th of April, and found them still at Wells. It then became his wisest policy to move towards them a little to the north, to increase his power of intercepting them on that road, without so far departing from London, as to let them outstrip him if they again took that direction. With this view, on the 28th and 29th, he moved to Cirencester.

BOOK
IV.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

There he heard, that on the next day they would be at Bath, and on the following, advance upon him, and take the chances of the field. This news was on such authority, that he marched three miles out of town to a spot convenient for the struggle, put his men into fit array, and awaited their coming.¹³

But he expected them in vain : the threat was but to mask their real purpose. To discover this he moved to Malmesbury, nearer to their camp, and found them on the full march to Bristol, then a strong walled town, where they obtained great supplies of men, money, and cannon.

They now declared they would give him battle at Sodbury, then reckoned to be nine miles from Bristol. They sent parties to take their ground on Sodbury Hill; and this was so publicly done, that the king could not doubt their intentions ; and on Thursday, the 2d of May, marched forward to this point, to take the chances of the conflict.

But when he reached the lines they had marked out, he found no enemy. He sent men to scour the country, but could gain no intelligence of their motions. They had so effectually deceived him, that they had gained upon him the march they had projected : and uncertain whether they were making a forced advance to London, or to the Severn, he was obliged to pause that night in a valley between the hill and Sodbury, anxiously awaiting some certain information about them.

At length, soon after three in the morning, he obtained correct intelligence, that they were on the high road to Gloucester, thro Bardsley. He summoned an immediate council of war, to determine

¹³ Harl. MSS.

whether he should try to arrest their passage over the Severn at Gloucester, or Tewkesbury. But it was clear, that they must be at Gloucester before he could reach it. He therefore dispatched trusty messengers to the son of lord Beauchamp, who held the castle of Gloucester for him, commanding him to defend it faithfully, and assuring him, that he was following them with a speed that must soon overtake them. His message got into Gloucester in time to save it. The queen soon presented her forces before it. They had marched all the night and morning to surprise it. Their friends in it were numerous, and they projected either to have defended it against the king, or to have passed thro it into Herefordshire, where Pembroke from Wales, and all their friends from Cheshire and Lancashire, on whom they much depended, could have joined them, with numbers that they thought would be irresistible.¹⁴

CHAP.
IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

Hence, on Friday morning, the 3d of May, at ten o'clock, they reached the gates of Gloucester, and demanded admission. The governor, knowing of the king's pursuit, repressed their adherents in the town, manned the walls, and refused to surrender. They menaced the town with an assault. But he calculated, that they would not venture on that, with the king on their rear, and was not intimidated. The queen's leaders then held a hasty council. Their sagacious movement was defeated. It was manifest, that there was not time to spare for an attempt to take the town by storm; and that it would be wiser to proceed, without resting, to Tewkesbury, where they would find an unobstructed passage. The decision was judicious, and they continued their course to

¹⁴ Marl. MSS.

BOOK IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

that place, which they reached about four in the afternoon on the same day.

But they had now marched, in that day and the night before, thirty-six miles, without rest, in a foul country, all thro lanes and stoney ways, and among woods, without any good refreshing, and most of them on foot: so that when they entered this town, they were so exhausted by want of sleep and food, and by fatigue, that they could proceed no farther. The horses and horsemen were as weary as the infantry. All demanded refreshment and repose. The queen, as a woman, looking first for safety and escape, desired to put the river between her and her indefatigable adversary. But to this it was objected, that if he was so near, to cross the river would be of no avail. If they were able to pass it, he could also follow: and for him to attack them when disordered, and only more wearied by the movement, was to make them his more certain prey. It was wiser to take a strong position where they were, and to recruit themselves for a combat that was now inevitable, than to take dastardly measures that would unman their spirits, destroy their unanimity, discourage their adherents, and but facilitate their destruction. It was impossible now to proceed without fighting; and they had only to prepare to give the battle in the way most advantageous to themselves.¹³

There seems nothing unsound or treacherous in this decision. Baffled at Gloucester, and so closely pursued, they were pushed to a necessity of fighting for their own safety; and, being superior in numbers, a strong position was better, in their state, than a passable river. This position was chosen with great

¹³ Harl. MSS.

judgment. It was a large field in an inclosure, even with the extremity of the town. The houses and the abbey were behind them ; in front and upon every side, were muddy lanes and deep ditches, with many hedges, besides hills and valleys. It was a place, “as right evil to approach as could well have been devised.” Here they pitched their camp, procured the refreshments they needed, and with due precautions provided for a restoring repose.

Edward, on the same morning, had early advanced his banners, divided his host into three battalions, sent off aforeriders and scourers on every side, and thus, in fair array, with his ordnance following, took his line of pursuit thro the campaign country called Cotteswold. His infantry were about 3000 : the rest were cavalry. It was a very hot day ; but he felt, like Bonaparte at Eckmul and Ulm, that the success he aimed at depended as much upon legs as upon arms ; and he marched straight forward, on the nearest line to Tewkesbury, without intermission, as he rightly supposed they would be driven to this point. His people found, in all their way, neither horse meat nor man’s meat, nor even drink for their animals, except at one small brook, which their carriages soon spoilt. But the king allowed no rest. He kept by this means within six or seven miles of his opponents, with the advantage of marching thro an open country, while they were forcing their way thro woods. He reached Cheltenham, as they got to Tewkesbury. He soon learnt that they were taking the field, and had determined to give battle. Tho his men had travelled above thirty miles that day, he permitted them only to wait to share what victuals he had brought with him, and set for-

CHAP.
IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

ward immediately to Tewkesbury ; and pursuing his usual plan, of placing himself at night as near his enemy as possible, he lodged his army within three miles of their encampment.¹⁶

It was an anxious night to all, but especially to the queen and her son, then a prince of great promise, in his seventeenth year. Her friends were sanguine, brave, zealous, and more numerous : but it was their last stake : a crown—death—or an imprisonment for life, were the alternatives in prospect : the most brilliant advantages of life, or its bitterest misfortunes. Edward was inferior in force : as she believed, in right—but when had Edward failed ? A mysterious fortune seemed to hang about his sword, which always gave it the triumph. Would it now desert him ? With the aid of her lords, she had prospered against others at Ludlow, at St. Albans, and at Wakefield : but she had never beaten him. Did it suit the plans of Providence to give the crown to her persecutor, or to her husband and herself ? The house of Lancaster had indeed usurped the diadem, but it had worn it for three reigns. Was it now to lose it for ever ? Such were the recollections that made the dreadful night of suspense and alarm still more gloomy. All was fearful and uncertain. Margaret could not partake the confidence of her friends, and awaited the terrible dawn that was advancing, with a solicitude that nothing could appease.

Saturday,
4 May
1471.
Battle of
Tewkes-
bury.

As soon as light appeared, Edward arranged his army into three divisions. He gave the van to Gloucester, ever desiring to be the foremost ; he led himself the centre ; and appointed his queen's brother, the marquis Dorset, and lord Hastings, to conduct the

¹⁶ Harl. MSS.

rear. He then displayed his banners, blew up his trumpets, and marched straight upon his antagonists. The duke of Somerset and his brother took the command of the most advanced division of the Lancastrians; the prince, with the martial prior, and lord Wenlock, were stationed in the centre; and the earl of Devon was appointed to the rear. The queen, with her son, rode about the field animating her partisans, and promising the most lavish rewards: and the combat soon began.¹⁷

CHAP.
IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

Edward saw that his opponents were "in a marvellous strong ground, right difficult to be assailed." But he directed Gloucester to attack. The duke found, in the front of their field, such protecting lanes and deep dikes, with so many hedges, trees, and bushes, that he could not break into their lines, so as to come hand to hand; he, therefore, ordered up the artillery, and directed it with accompanying flights of arrows so fiercely on Somerset's position, and with such heavy loss to him, as to provoke or compel him to become himself the assailant. Somerset determined upon a flank movement on his enemies; and by certain paths, which he had before surveyed, but which were to the king's party unknown, rushed on the king's centre, with so violent an assault, so unlooked for from that quarter, that he drove it to a distance from the lines up a hill, that was near them. Charging then the duke of Gloucester's division, he pressed that with equal advantage, and seemed to have begun the accomplishment of a certain victory.

But the military judgment of Edward had taken one precautionary measure, from which he now reaped an unexpected benefit. He had observed a wood

¹⁷ Harl. MSS.

BOOK IV. near his enemies' lines; and supposing they might plant a body in ambush within it, he had chosen out 200 spearmen, and placed them in a mass, about a quarter of a mile from the field, with a charge to watch that corner of the wood, and with a discretion, if no danger issued from it, to act as occasion should suggest to them would be most expedient.

REIGN OF EDW. IV.

The Lancastrians did not occupy the wood as he had anticipated, and perhaps, by not doing so, had neglected an advantage. But this party finding no employment from that quarter, and observing the duke of Somerset's successes, saw an opportunity of acting upon the flank of his attack, of which they speedily availed themselves: for while Edward was rallying on Somerset, they charged aside upon the duke's rear, and threw it into confusion by an assault as unforeseen as unintelligible.

Sudden movements frequently decide battles, because no remedy as immediate is thought of or can be applied. The king gave no time for recollection; he pressed vigorously on; and the Lancastrian division was in disorder, and from disorder turned into flight, before Somerset could stop the panic, or make any other movement to prevent its consequences. They fled into the park, into the meadow, into the lanes and the ditches, wherever they thought it likely to escape the danger. The king, with his accustomed energy, rushed from them upon prince Edward's centre, which, shaken by the confusion of the foremost battalions, soon gave way to his determined attack. Gloucester and Hastings exerted themselves to complete the ruin. The Lancastrians broke in every part; many were drowned in a mill stream in the meadow; many sought refuge in the church, the

abbey, and the town. Somerset, thinking, perhaps justly, that Wenlock did not properly support him, is stated to have cloven his head with a battle-axe—an insane act of resentment, which left the centre battalions without a leader. The prince was taken as flying towards the town, and was slain in the field.¹⁶ The earl of Devon also fell, with several gentlemen. No victory could be more complete.

The king went immediately to the abbey, and, before the high altar, returned thanks for the momentous event to its great giver; and, with the true feelings of a royal heart and christian spirit, generously granted a free pardon to all who had taken refuge in the church and abbey. It was the only sincere mark of his gratitude to heaven that he could then display; and it was creditable to his magnanimity, that he suffered no human passions to prevent it.

But he soon checked the noble emotions of his instinctive nature, and allowed a base-minded policy, or baser persuasions from the self-interest of others, who looked only to attainders and confiscations, to degrade him to the meanest act of dishonorable cruelty of which a sovereign could be guilty. He forfeited

CHAP.
IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

¹⁶ Harl. MSS. It is important to remark, that this authentic MS. not only gives no sanction to the popular tale of Edward's calling the prince before him, rebuking him for his opposition, and striking him for his answer, and of Gloucester and Clarence stabbing him; but declares, that he was slain in the field. Another author, still in MS., Bernard Andreas, who wrote the Life of Henry VII. in 1509, about thirty-eight years after this battle, and in the highest style of compliment to this Lancastrian king, speaking of the death of this young prince, tho' he abuses Richard most zealously for his other crimes, yet does not hint that Richard had stabbed the son of Margaret. On the contrary, his words imply, like the present author's, that he fell in the battle. His expressions are, 'Is enim ante Bernardi campum in Theoxberye prælio, belligerens ceciderat.' Dom. A. 10, p. 145. The extract from the Chronicle of Tewkesbury, copied by Stowe, mentions, that the prince was slain in the field of Ganton, beside Tewkesbury. Harl. MSS. 545. p. 102.

BOOK IV.
REIGN OF EDW. IV.

his royal word, and recalled his forgiveness. He appointed the dukes of Gloucester and Norfolk, as a military tribunal, to determine on the fate of those he had pardoned: and these judges, without mercy, two days afterwards, when all the tumultuous agitations of the day had subsided, coolly doomed them to immediate execution. The duke of Somerset was among the number. The prior of St. John, and fourteen other knights and gentlemen, were beheaded with him, in the market-place of Tewkesbury. This lesson of cruelty and breach of promise in Edward, was not lost on his brother, whom he made its executioner; and his own children were destined to be victims of the same vices, from this brother's hands.

The unhappy Margaret had retired to a religious house in the neighborhood, when the sanguinary conflict began, but was discovered soon after its determination. Edward moved, on the 11th of May, to Coventry, to proceed against the numerous bodies that were rising in the north, whom her unfortunate friends were so rapidly marching to join, when Edward's celerity had arrested them: but the news of his decisive victory occasioned them to disperse, from their own prudence. The queen was brought to him at Coventry, and was ordered into imprisonment at the Tower. The earl of Northumberland came there to assure him, that all was now tranquil. But these tidings were immediately followed by others from the south, that a new assailant had started up, whom neglect might make formidable.¹⁹ What he attempted, shewed the wisdom of Edward's activity; for if delay had permitted all these hostile parties to

¹⁹ According to the Tewkesbury Chronicle, Lady Anne was taken with her. Harl. MSS. N^o. 545. p. 102.

have acted in concert, no exertions, in the hesitating state of the country, might have been sufficient to have preserved him.

Warwick had commissioned the illegitimate son of lord Falconbridge to keep and watch the channel. He became an active cruiser; and, co-operating with the Lancastrians in Kent, he found himself at the head of 16 or 17,000 men; and with these, on the 12th of May, eight days after the battle of Tewkesbury, appeared before the walls of London, and demanded the release of king Henry. So many persons in the capital were disposed to favor his attempt, that an earnest express was sent to Edward, urging his immediate presence. The servants and apprentices of the city, for the sake of plunder, were ready for an insurrection; and the king was informed, that to repress this new enemy, he would need a greater force than he had yet employed since his landing. As this required time to collect, he sent, without delay, on the 14th of May, a well selected body of 1500 men, with the ablest commanders, to act till he came; and two days afterwards, he left Coventry, searching on all sides for succor.

The mayor and aldermen closing their gates against Falconbridge, he withdrew to Kingston, to see what measures would be most efficient for his object. He was a man of great talent and enterprise; but he found that the victory of Tewkesbury had decided the mind of the country, and that the nobility and gentry were now preparing to join the king in great numbers. His object of restoring Henry, was therefore impracticable; but he had an army that must be gratified by plunder, and he resolved to force the metropolis for that purpose, and then sail away to

CHAP.
IV.

REPORT OF
EDW. IV.

Falcon-
bridge at-
tacks Lon-
don,
12 May.

BOOK IV.
REIGN OF EDW. IV.

regions where he might enjoy the booty. With this desperate plan, he collected his ships and men, rowed down to London, and cannonaded it with great violence. The citizens were as active with their artillery. The partisan, now aiming to be the robber, set fire to London bridge, then a street of houses; and dividing his host into two parts, attacked the city at Aldgate and at Bishopsgate. His guns caused the gates and adjoining mansions to be in flames, and 300 houses were involved in conflagration. But the defenders filled the streets with artillery, and he could not force the passage. Many knights and noblemen, from Essex and other parts, joined in the defence: and lord Rivers, who commanded the Tower, making a vigorous sally from a postern gate, while the mayor and nobility issued from another, the assailants were driven to the water-side, and to their shipping, as the city was burning in three places.²⁰

Falconbridge, by the 17th of May, had collected them again on Blackheath; but when he found that Edward was swiftly marching towards him, with numbers increasing as he came, he moved leisurely thro Kent, to collect the means of a struggle with the king himself.

Edward entered London on the 21st of May, with 30,000 men: such was the effect of his great successes. He knighted the mayor and aldermen, with others, who had so bravely defended the city; but as Falconbridge was too active, and Kent too full of combustible materials to be left unguarded, he stayed only one day in London, and on the next, went with his whole army towards Canterbury.²¹

Falconbridge moved towards Sandwich, where

Edward reaches London, 21 May.

²⁰ Harl. MSS.

²¹ Ib.

forty-seven ships obeyed his commands, and he fortified the town with great strength. But, when he learnt that the king had reached Canterbury, with a force so overpowering, he determined to use his means of offence only to obtain a pardon ; and therefore sent to Edward, at that city, offering to deliver up all the ships and army, on the terms of grace and forgiveness. A long deliberation followed in the royal council, on this subject. Vindictive policy suggested punishment; but the resolution of Falconbridge was known ; his means were yet great, and despair would make them greater ; and having the command of the sea, and the possession of a haven, he could take all the chances of battle, and work all its mischief, and yet escape to produce new disquiets elsewhere. It was rightly deemed wiser to convert such an enemy into an ally : and the duke of Gloucester was sent to receive his submission, and assure his forgiveness.

On the 26th of May, he delivered up all his vessels and the town ;²² and thus ended the eventful struggles which attended Edward's restoration. In the short space of eleven weeks, from an exile, he had become a king, tho his means had been scanty ; the population generally hesitating or adverse, and the existing government and its friends, always opposing him with superior forces and zealous adherents.

The great consumption of human life in these numerous conflicts, and their widely-diffusing calamities, strike painfully our imagination : and notwithstanding the attractions of their daring courage and vast exertions, excite our condemning sympathy. But it is a relief to the reason, if not to the heart, to

CHAP.
IV.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.Falcon-
bridge sur-
renders.

²² At Michaelmas following he was beheaded. ‘ His head was yesterday set upon London bridge, looking into Kent-ward.’ —2 Fenn, 82.

BOOK IV.
REIGN OF EDW. IV.

consider, that as it is the violent and most impassioned, on both sides, who chiefly begin and uphold these contests, it is always they who press the foremost to grasp their advantages; to fight their battles, and to perish in their slaughter. The dying or disabled are usually those who volunteer to their fate, or who have been most instrumental in producing it; and bear no proportion to the more peaceful myriads, and sometimes millions, who, by taking no active part for either of the contending competitors, escape the personal miseries which every warring partisan confronts or participates; and who continue to enjoy that prolongation of life and tranquillity, that flow of social comfort, and domestic happiness; that approving conscience, and that applauding heaven, which principally contribute to our earthly beatitude. They who perish, suffer by their own choosing and spontaneous agency; while the humbler, the gentler, and the calmer; the more moderate, and the more contented; the religious; the better-reasoning; the less-interested, and the unambitious, decline both the prizes and the perils of scenes, so impossible to reconcile with philosophy, or its diviner queen—unperverted Christianity. The benevolent taste will, indeed, regret, that even the violent, the restless, the vindictive, the proud, and the mercenary, should so torment and destroy each other; sacrificing an existence which they cannot renew, and daring consequences which no mortal can either calculate or avert: but as every man may abstain from being either of these characters, it is better for society, that they who choose to wield the homicidal weapons should be the principal victims. War is an evil so great, and its slaughter so abominable, that it would

never outlive the flattery that disguises its deformities, nor the patronage that recommends it, if the rational would cease to praise it, and parents to value it as a profession. Wiser modes of arranging national disputes would be then adopted by statesmen: and national prosperity would flourish more uninterruptedly by the change. War has destroyed more kingdoms than it has saved: and will always produce far greater evils than it can prevent.

During these transactions, king Henry died in the Tower, so early on the 22d of May, as that his body was on that day exhibited in St. Paul's churchyard.²² Popular belief, excited by the partisans of Henry VII, apparently sanctioned by the violent death of Edward V, and perpetuated by the genius of Shakspear, has charged the duke of Gloucester with his murder. Modern doubters have questioned the justness of this imputation; and as the manuscript documents, quoted in this History, enable us to judge of it more soundly; we will attempt, with these before us, an impartial discrimination of the probable truth.

Edward left Coventry on the 16th of May, and did not arrive at London till Tuesday, the 21st.²³ He stayed but one day in the metropolis, and went with all his army in pursuit of Falconbridge.²⁴

CHAP.
IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

Henry's
death,
22d May
1471;

not killed
by Gloucester.

²² Stowe's transcript of Master Fleetwood's book dates Henry's death the 23d of May. His extract from Master Bell's book places it on the 22d of May, with these particulars: ' F dominical and Wednesday, the vigil and even of the Ascension, from the Toure of London he was brought deade through London, openly, while upon the Friday next after was had and carried unto th' Abbey of Chertsey, where he lyeth buried.' MSS. Harl. N° 545. p. 134. Fabian also mentions, that on the eve of Ascension-day his body was brought from the Tower to St. Paul's church, thro the high street of the city. p. 505. As Easter-day was, in that year, on the 14th of April, Ascension-day must have been on the 23d of May, as in the years 1805 and 1816, and its eve was the 22d.

²³ Harl. MSS. This writer gives the day of the week, which shews the date of 21 May to be correct.

²⁴ The words of the MSS. are, ' The king, incontinent, after his coming

BOOK IV. Gloucester had come with him to London, and departed with him into Kent, and after conducting the negotiations with Falconbridge, received the submission of this dangerous partisan on the 26th of May. On the only day that Edward stayed in London, he had to await and receive the congratulations of the metropolis, to welcome his nobility, to confer with his counsellors, to take refreshments himself, to station and supply his accompanying army, and to provide the necessaries, and make the arrangements, for their immediate advance into Kent. In all these deeds and preparations of state, council, festivity, and war, Gloucester was a principal person; and must have been as much employed as the king, during the only day that both were in London: and this was the day on the morning of which Henry died, if Edward stayed in the city all the 22d: but as they remained there only one day, and arrived on the 21st, the natural import of the words would seem to be, that the march into Kent was begun on the 22d:²⁰ but whether Edward and his brother quitted London on the day of Henry's death, or early the next morning, there does not seem to have been time for the perpetration of such an useless crime. It must be also remembered, that Gloucester was then but eighteen years of age—a time of life when a prince is not likely to be an assassin; and all the exigencies were over that could have tempted him to be so. The presence of so many noblemen as now came to congratulate Edward, and the joyous movements of the pleased

to London, tarried *but one day*, and went, with his whole army, after his said traitors, into Kent.'

²⁰ Edward was at Canterbury, with his army, on May 25. To have marched 70 miles, with all his military apparatus, by that time, makes it probable that he left London on the 22d.

population, at his arrival from two great fields of decisive victory, increase the improbability, that a high-spirited youth, whom all were praising and applauding for his leading share of the triumphs, should have been either willing or able to have broke from all this bustle, acclamation, pomp, business, friends, and following crowds, to go into the Tower to commit the murder. At such a time he could have gone no where obscurely. The public eye of soldiers, nobility, or people, must have been upon him all that single day, which he passed in the metropolis. The incredibility of the tale is augmented by the circumstance, that queen Margaret had been brought up with Edward to London, and was at this very crisis lodged in the Tower. That the second most honored person in the kingdom should, amid the feelings of general gratulation, have committed the savage butchery of killing a husband, in the presence or immediate vicinity of his wife, is not to be credited without evidence the most manifest. But the Tower was at this moment under the military command of lord Rivers, one of the most gallant and applauded characters of that age of chivalry; between whom, as the queen's brother, and Richard, there always existed a political jealousy: and, therefore, it is not probable that Richard would, under his eye, have committed an act repulsive to the feelings of all men; and which Rivers would have most indignantly censured, and, if apprized of the intention, would have resisted. Hence we may consider this contemporary account as the true one: that Henry was so shocked at the tidings of the death of his son, the irretrievable defeats, and loss of his friends, and the captivity of his queen, that his frame

CHAP.
IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

BOOK
IV.
REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

sank under the effect of the sudden communication.* He had been frequently shaken by illness before : and his meek and kind temper had an affectionate sensibility, which sorrow without remedy, and despair without hope, occurring in an unexpected accumulation, may have fatally overpowered. At eighteen, Richard could not have formed designs on the crown, with Edward in full health, only thirty years of age, and having frequent children ; and with an elder brother, also married, to precede him. Both of these were more interested to destroy Henry than he was. Yet it is not likely, that either of them would have chosen or could have used such a moment for such a purpose.*

* This writer says, of the late disasters of Henry's family and friends, 'The certainty of all which came to the knowlege of the said Henry, being in the Tower, not having afore that, knowlege of the said matters. He took it to so great despite, ire, and indignation, that of pure displeasure and melancholy, he died.' Harl. MSS. This author's work shews that he wrote it while Edward IV. was alive, and about this very time; for he says, 'Thus was finished the re-entry of our sovereign lord Edward IV. With the help of Almighty God, which from his beginniing *hitherto* hath not failed him, *in short time* he shall appease his subjects through all his royalme, that peace and tranquillity shall grow and multiply in the same, from day to day.' Harl. MSS. p. 48.

* The suspicion, or belief, of some of the old writers, that he was murdered, may have had some foundation, without our referring it to Gloucester or to Edward. His unfortunate reign had been productive of such calamities to many, that there could be no deficiency of furious spirits, in that vindictive age, who would desire to gratify their resentments by his blood. His friend Blackman mentions two facts, which seem to be of this description. One man struck him a violent blow on his neck with a weapon, meaning to have dashed out his brains, or to have beheaded him. The mild king bore it patiently, and only exclaimed, 'Forsooth, forsooth, you do foully to smite so a king anointed.' p. 301. Another person, while he was in the Tower, stabbed him in the side, and then, thinking he had killed him, fled away. This was before Henry's short restoration. During that period, this assassin was taken and brought to the king on his throne, who was then convalescent, and who immediately pardoned him, p. 302. As this last attack, from its being mentioned that Henry was then only getting well, could have occurred but a few months before his actual death, it may be that which occasioned the notion of his being murdered. Indeed, the weakening effects of it may have contributed to his demise.

C H A P. V.

*Death of CLARENCE—Factions in EDWARD'S Court—
His Wars with France—His Death, and Character.*

EDWARD reigned about twelve years after his restoration. The principal events of this period may be arranged under four classes: The destruction of Clarence—The factions in his court—His wars with France—And, his death and personal character.

Fall of
Clarence.

The great earl of Warwick had left his rich possessions the inheritance of his two daughters. Clarence having married the eldest in 1472, his brother Richard, the duke of Gloucester, wished the hand of Anne, the youngest. Clarence, aware that a division of the heritage must follow her nuptials, disguised and concealed her. She had been contracted, but not married, to the prince Edward, who fell at Tewkesbury:¹ and Gloucester, who became twenty

¹ All our historians speak of this lady Anne, as actually married to prince Edward; and hence Shakespear's satirical scene, of Richard, the alleged murderer of her assumed husband, courting and winning her. But it is clear, from the MSS. before quoted, p. 327, that she was not actually married to the prince, when her father left France. It was an alliance required by Warwick, in July 1470, and refused by Margaret. She at last assented to it in August, not for its solemnization at that time, but only as a conditional contract. The prince was to marry her, if Warwick recovered the kingdom for him. But the Warwick drove out Edward in October, yet Edward, in the following March, recovered his throne; and Warwick fell, before the prince could land in the following April, to perish at Tewkesbury, on the 4th of May: so that the condition which Margaret annexed to the marriage did not take place, nor is there any contemporary account of its actual celebration; nor does there seem to have been time for it; and, with Margaret's adverse feelings, it is not likely that her son, then but sixteen, would have been allowed to shew much attention to the lady, who was, in the meantime, left under the vigilant care of the queen.

BOOK IV. years of age in October 1472, desired both her person and rightful fortune. He discovered her in the dress of a cook maid, and carried her to St. Martin's **REIGN OF EDW. IV.** sanctuary.³ The quarrel between the brothers, on this subject, occasioned the king to remonstrate with Clarence, who forgot both equity and his own honor so far as to say, "He may have my lady sister-in-law, if he will; but we will part no livelihood."⁴ Richard married her, tho apparently with some informality;⁵ and the pecuniary struggle between him and Clarence ended, in 1474, in an act of parliament, partitioning the inheritances of the ladies between them, and giving the husbands a life interest in the shares of their wives, if they survived them.⁶ The chronicler of the day marks the dissension as an incurable affair.⁷

Three years afterwards, a personal difference arose between Clarence and the king, which ended in a catastrophe that has disgraced Edward's memory. The duke, by degrees, began to withdraw from the king's festive parties, council and court. He was supposed to be affronted at the resumption of some grants. But a more important cause of dissension arose. Clarence becoming a widower, his sister Margaret, with whom he was the favorite, projected

³ Croyl. 557.

² Fenn, p. 92.

⁴ I infer the irregularity from the statute, expressing the possibility, 'If they should be hereafter divorced, and, after the same, be lawfully married;' also, 'If divorced, and, after that, he do effectual diligence and continual devoir, by all convenient and lawful means, to be lawfully married to the said Anne, and during her life be not wedded to any other woman.' P. Rolls, 6. p. 101.

⁵ P. Rolls, 6. p. 100, 101. This partition reduced the fortune of the widowed countess of Warwick to a small jointure. One of the last things we hear of her is, that she was conveyed northward, out of Beverley sanctuary, by sir Jaunes Tyrrel, who became so notorious under Richard III. 'men say, by the king's assent, whereto some men say, that the duke of Clarence is not agreed.' ² Fenn, 145. ⁷ Croyl. 557.

to unite him with the heiress of Burgundy.⁷ The CHAP.
 queen desired this great match for her own brother,
 lord Rivers;⁸ and Edward, jealous that Clarence
 should become possessed of so much power as the
 dukedom of Burgundy would give him, opposed the
 alliance with him. Each began to look upon the
 other with no fraternal aspect: and Clarence, unable
 to contain his resenting feelings, took the occasion of
 Burdett, one of his esquires, being condemned for
 necromancy and treason, to assert the man's inno-
 cence, before the great council of the kingdom. The
 king, yielding to his suspicions and indignation,
 summoned him to appear to a charge of treason
 against himself, and arrested him. The direful debate
 was agitated in the ensuing parliament, and the dis-
 cussion was personal and public. The king forgot
 nature and decorum so far as himself to arraign Cl-
 arence, and Clarence answered his brother. Witnesses
 came forward, who seemed rather to act the part of
 accusers than evidence. The duke offered personal
 combat.⁹ But the parliament pronounced him guilty
 of high treason, on a strange medley of charges.¹⁰
 His execution was ordered, and the duke of Buck-
 ingham was appointed to superintend it.¹¹ But this

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

V.

⁷ Croyl. 557.

⁸ Hall, 327.

⁹ Croyl. 558.

¹⁰ The act of attainder in 1477, after mentioning the previous conduct which the king had forgiven, accused him of contriving the destruction of the king and his issue, and to subvert the government; of causing his servants to sow sedition; of giving his retainers money to assemble the people, and feast them with venison dinners, and to persuade them that his esquire Burdett had been wrongfully put to death; of saying, that the king poisoned his subjects by necromancy; of declaring, that the king was illegitimate, from the incontinency of his mother, and had taken his livelihood from him, and intended to consume him as a candle perishes in burning; of inducing several of the king's subjects to swear fealty to himself; and of attempting to get a strange child into his castle, to pass for his son. Parl. Rolls, v. 6. p. 193-5.

¹¹ This appears from the commission, dated 7 February 1478, which, after reciting the conviction of Clarence, and that justice was a virtue of

BOOK IV. was delayed, perhaps from better feelings emerging in Edward's mind, till the speaker of the commons came to the house of lords, to require it to take place.¹² On the 17th of February 1478, his death occurred,¹³ in private. Its mode was concealed;¹⁴ but the opinion prevailed, that he was drowned in a butt of malmsey wine.¹⁵ That he was one of the idols of the populace,¹⁶ may have hastened his fate. The king, when the act was irreparable, felt that he had killed a brother; and endeavored to ease his convicting conscience by inculpating others. Whenever any one sued to him for the pardon of another, he would exclaim, "O unfortunate brother! for whose life not one creature would make intercession!"¹⁷ It was a crime of jealousy and resentment, which was aggravated by the legal charges that attempted to vindicate it. But his condemnation by the parliament involves both the houses in the production of his death.

It has been usual with our historians to impute the destruction of Clarence to the machinations of his brother, the duke of Gloucester; on whom, after the accession of Henry VII. it became fashionable to charge every crime. But there are grounds on which it may be ascribed to a very different party. There

the Most High, which the king was bound to follow, first, for his own security; secondly, for the defence of the church; and thirdly, for the public good,—appoints the duke of Buckingham seneschal, for the execution of the judgment. Parl. Rolls, 6. p. 195.

¹² Croyl. 562. ¹³ Fab. 510. ¹⁴ Croyl. 562.

¹⁵ Comines, 1. p. 65, Fabian, p. 510, Hall, p. 326, and Grafton, 742, mention this fate.

¹⁶ Croyland says, that on Clarence's death, 'all the idols were now exterminated, on which the eyes of the people, ever desirous of novelty, were accustomed to be turned.' Croyl. 562. Warwick and Clarence were idols of this sort, and hence the royal jealousy of the latter.

¹⁷ Hull, 326; and Croyland says, 'sæpissimè pœnitens facti.' 562.

is a record, which speaks, at this time, of great differences¹⁸ between Clarence and the queen's brother, lord Rivers. His confiscated estates were chiefly given to Rivers;¹⁹ and the wardship and marriage of his heir were granted to the queen's son, marquis Dorset.²⁰ So that the persons who immediately profited by his death, were not so much Gloucester or his friends, as the queen's party, their great political antagonists. Besides the queen's efforts to gain the heiress of Burgundy for her brother Rivers, it is also to be remarked, that the act of attainder charges Clarence with purposing treason against the queen and her son, and also against the great part of the nobles of this land.²¹ If the queen did not destroy him, she at least did not interfere to save him; and, as her influence with Edward was persuasive to the last, Gloucester was not more implicated than she was, in not becoming his intercessor. But as Clarence was opposed in his wishes by her and her brother, and had been deprived of part of the king's grants to him, it is probable that he was becoming hostile to the family interest of her relations, and may have been a victim to their vindictive policy.

The factions in the court and councils of Edward, from his restoration to his grave, embittered his own peace, insured new commotions to the nation, and produced the destruction of his own dynasty. Pursuing a wise object in an unwise manner, he continued his plan to emancipate the crown from the control of the aristocracy, by the steady elevation of

CHAP.
V.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

Divided
state of
Edward's
court.

¹⁸ 'Grandia gravamina.' Cal. Rot. Pat. 18 Ed. IV. p. 323.

¹⁹ Cal. Rot. p. 323. 'Tho a few were given to lord Howard, and Gloucester. Ib.'

²⁰ Cal. Rot. p. 325, 6.
²¹ Parl. Rolls, 6. p. 193. That it was 'kindled and set afire by the queen and her blood,' is one of Hall's suppositions. 326.

BOOK IV. the queen's family. As the great families of Warwick and Somerset, who had commanded the west and north of England, had fallen in the civil war,²² the main impediment to his wishes seemed removed. But other nobles had arisen, with the same opposing feelings on this subject, in their stead : and Hastings, Buckingham, Stanley, Howard, and others, were nearly as proud and aspiring, tho' less formidable, than the Warwicks, Salisburys, and Montagues had been. But the dread of Edward's military exploits kept every one from revolt ; and he thought, by inviting the heads of both parties to his court, and by sharing the bounties of the crown between them, he could ensure a peaceful reign, and appease their animosities. This policy procured a temporary pacification, while he held the sceptre ; but left all the angry passions boiling in their breasts, and waiting the season of a safe explosion. Envy, jealousy, and ambition, never forgive. Favors nourish, but do not satisfy them. Continual strifes arose to produce increased hatred ; and this fixed a mutual fear and distrust in all. The feuds were at one time so high, that the king arrested his favorite Hastings, on some quarrel with Rivers, and sent him to the Tower, where that nobleman daily expected his death warrant.²³ That a great hostility had long existed between this nobleman and the queen's family, is emphatically declared by a contemporary of consideration.²⁴ A long and wiser life might have cemented the two parties ; but Edward's premature death,

²² Comines, 1. p. 65.

²³ Sir Thomas More mentions, that he had been accused to Edward by Rivers, the queen's brother, p. 206.

²⁴ Croyl. 565. He describes himself as one of the king's privy councillors, a doctor in canon law, and one of the commissioners sent to recover Calais in 1471. p. 557.

while their competitions and mistrust were in full vigor, only ensured the calamities that soon pursued his own children and the queen's relations. He left these, and the ancient nobility, in the state of as complete a struggle for life and death, as had formerly existed between his own family interest and the house and friends of Lancaster.²⁵

The reign and deceitful policy of Louis XI. had diminished the power of the great vassals of the French monarchy ; and gradually raised the crown to a superiority and effective influence, and increasing command, which it never lost in that country till the revolution of the last century. Louis had surmounted or defeated every confederacy against it, when, in 1473, Edward appeared earnest for an invasion of France. He stated his intentions from the throne. Many eloquent orations were spoken in parliament, to excite the warlike fever. The national pulse began to beat with accordant emotion ; 13,000 archers, and liberal subsidies, were granted. The new financial measure of requested benevolences, or voluntary contributions, produced a full exchequer.²⁶ A peace, to secure the northern borders, was completed with Scotland ;²⁷ and arrangements for his co-operation

CHAP.

V.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.His hosti-
lities with
France.

²⁵ It is gratifying, amid the bloodshed of Edward's reign, to recollect, that, during its latter part, the ART OF PRINTING was introduced into England, and the first printing-press established in Westminster, by W. Caxton. The precise year cannot be determined; but it was between 1471 and 1477. The first book from his press, which has the year and place of printing subjoined, was the one of lord Rivers, mentioned hereafter. This is dated 1477. The connexion of great events with common incidents is curious. It was the marriage of Edward's sister that occasioned Caxton to go to Burgundy, as part of her suite; and there he became acquainted with this invaluable art, then recently discovered : so that Margaret's nuptials led to the first establishment of printing in England. The tale of the archbishop Bourchier's introducing it, is neither believed nor authenticated.

²⁶ Croyl. 558. Parl. Rolls, 9. p. 4.

²⁷ After the feeble effort made by the Scots to assist Margaret, in

BOOK IV. were settled with headstrong Burgundy, on whose supporting movements the brilliancy of the expected success would depend. The high-road to his new temple of fame thus prepared, in June 1475, Edward passed over to Calais, and entered France with a splendid and powerful army, glowing with English vigor, and confident hope.²⁸

**REIGN OF
EDW. IV.**

But happily for France, the final achievement depended on Burgundy's zealous concurrence; and this restless, ambitious, arrogant, unteachable, presumptuous, brave, but untractable duke, had at this juncture embroiled himself, unnecessarily, with the Germans, and was unwisely besieging the petty town of Nuz, near Cologne, as a step in the prosecution of his great projects of aggrandizement,²⁹ when England's gallant army appeared on the plains of France. The duke hated Louis XI. and had engaged to co-operate with Edward; but his pride could not submit to meet him, as the repulsed assailant of an inconsiderable fortification, and he persisted in his attacks upon it, altho its resolute and successful defence baffled all his exertions. In vain Edward twice sent lord Rivers

1463, her defeat at the battle of Hexham, occasioned a truce between the two countries, to be made in 1464, for fifteen years, which was afterwards prolonged to 1519. Commissioners were appointed, in the interval, to adjust the differences which arose from the conflicts of the borderers; and in 1474, a contract of marriage was settled between James, the prince of Scotland, and Cecilia, the youngest daughter of Edward IV., both children, which did not take effect. Henry's Hist. Engl. v. 9. Pinkert. Hist. Scotl. v. 1.

²⁸ Croyl. 558. Comines mentions, that he was attended by the flower of the English nobility, being 1500 persons, in full armor, and each with several horsemen in their retinue; 15,000 archers on horseback, and a great number of infantry, with artillery. There was not one useless person in the army; and 3000 men besides were to have been landed in Bretagne. 1. p. 329.

²⁹ Comines says, 'If he took Nuz, he meant, after capturing two or three more towns that would have blocked up Cologne, to have conquered all the country, from the Rhine to Holland.' v. 1. p. 310.

to intreat him to raise the siege. In vain the apostolic legate, and the king of Denmark, endeavored to negotiate a peace between the duke and the emperor. His answer was, that his honor rested upon the capture of the place, and he would listen to no other terms;³⁰ but the emperor's overpowering army advancing, he was driven from the siege with disgrace:³¹ and fighting the Germans soon afterwards, with an inferior force, against the advice of his best officers, he lost his bravest troops in a ruinous defeat.³²

CHAP.
V.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

During this infatuated conduct, Louis, who dreaded Edward's warlike talents, but knew the weaknesses of his character, and saw the complexion of his court, profited by Burgundy's absence: and by very conciliatory overtures, by the most flattering attentions, and by a profusion of costly gifts,³³ to the chief lords,

³⁰ Comines, 317.

³¹ Ib. 300 and 316. He lost 4000 soldiers at this siege. Comines, in simple language, gives the unvarnished truth, which Hall has exaggerated into a dramatic romance, in the old style of chivalry. p. 308-19.

³² Comines, 438-40. This author, who knew him well, describes him as full of self-love and arrogance, always attributing his successes to his own wisdom and conduct; insatiably eager for fame, and ambitious to imitate the kings and heroes of antiquity; therefore always in wars, and ever forming extravagant designs. This conduct ruined his family and state. 1 Com. 443-6. His first victory, gained in 1465 against Louis XI. more by chance than conduct, but which he ascribed to himself, so inflated his mind, that he was never afterwards governed by any advice. Ib. 43.

³³ To the disgrace of the king's counsellors at that time, we read, that besides the 75,000 crowns paid to Edward, 16,000 more were distributed to his chancellor, master of the rolls, lord chamberlain, sir Thomas Montgomery, lord Howard, lord Cheney, marquis Dorset, and others. To lord Howard, besides his pension, Louis gave, in two years, above 24,000 crowns in money and plate; and, to lord Hastings, at one time, 1000 marks in plate, and a pension of 2000 crowns a year, being double of what he had before taken from Burgundy. Com. 1. 6. c. 2. v. 2. p. 6, 7. This author, who was Louis's agent in some of these transactions, affirms, that Edward's 'lord chamberlain, chancellor, admiral, master of the horse, and several other great lords of England, were at the same time pensioners to the king of France.' Ib. Few sovereigns have bribed the ministers of their enemies with more publicity than Louis on this occasion.

The

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

and even counsellors of the king, persuaded Edward to change his warlike purposes, into a friendly negotiation. A truce for seven years, an immediate payment of 75,000 crowns, the annual remittance of 50,000 crowns to England, and an engagement from Louis, that his eldest son should marry Edward's daughter Elizabeth, formed the terms of pacification.²⁴ The conciliating annuity was for many years punctually sent;²⁵ a sacrifice of policy, which, whether verbally called a tribute or a present, was meant to have the effect which it produced, of gratifying English pride, and of averting an English invasion.²⁶

1480. This treaty laid one of the great beams of the structure of the French monarchy, that soon rapidly arose, to the astonishment, and almost to the command of Europe. Vigorous hostilities would have disabled Louis XI. from pursuing or profiting by the progressive encroachments of his crafty policy; and

The moral coquetry of Hastings, in taking his pension, but refusing to give the French ambassador a receipt for it, is curious. He said, ‘If you wish me to receive it, you may put it into my sleeve; but you shall have neither letter, nor acquittance for it, from me.’ Com. ib. He was, perhaps, afraid of furnishing a legal document for a future impeachment. The others gave their receipts, ‘which,’ Comines adds, ‘are still to be seen in the chamber of accounts at Paris.’ Ib.

²⁴ The public papers on this treaty are in Rymer, v. 12. p. 14–20. The 50,000 crowns were to be paid in London, at Easter and Michaelmas, and the bank of the *Medicis* guaranteed the payment. p. 20. Louis also paid 50,000 crowns for the ransom of queen Margaret; and on the 13th November 1475, she was released, and sent to France. Thus, after above thirty years of harassed greatness and vicissitudes, returning to the private life from which she had been taken.

²⁵ Rymer has printed the regular discharges for this payment, up to Easter 1482. The last receipt is dated 25th August. p. 136.

²⁶ Edward's army reached Calais, in its return from this expedition, on the 4th September 1475; and on the 11th September, began to cross the sea to England. 5 Paston's Letters, p. 113. Comines remarks of Louis XI. that he understood breaking and dividing of leagues better than any prince he ever knew. He spared neither money nor pains, and applied them to both ministers and masters. p. 119. He allowed the English to call his pension, a tribute. Com. p. 6.

have rescued Burgundy and Bretagne from that advancing absorption, which this pacification accelerated and ensured. Some, both in the council and parliament, urged Edward into a vigorous interposition.²⁷ But seduced by his love of enjoyment, and interested friends,²⁸ into inaction, the provinces of these two dukedoms were, by his indolent connivance, virtually surrendered to the ambition of the French king; and the foolish and meddling restlessness of the duke of Burgundy, greedy of fame, but unable to discern the true path to it, only hastened the catastrophe which it was his dearest interest to have prevented. Plunging into needless hostilities with the Swiss, while Louis was hovering around him, ever watching his day of self-sacrificing weakness; he lost, in one year, three battles, that consumed the military power of his state; and in the last his life; when he had only a very young and unmarried daughter to succeed him. Louis availing himself of her enfeebled condition, seized immediately on several of her towns. Edward, soothed with the hope of his daughter's aggrandizement, looked on without any other interference than sending ambassadors to mediate a peace for Burgundy. Louis spoke kindly, and treated them magnificently; but instead of abstaining from the gratification of his ambition,

²⁷ Comines, p. 9, 10.

²⁸ Comines' account is, 'King Edward was a voluptuous prince, wholly addicted to his pleasure and ease; and having been, in his former expeditions, reduced to great straits and necessities, he had no mind to involve himself in a new war. The 50,000 crowns being also punctually paid him, softened his heart, and hindered him from concerning himself in that affair. Besides, his ambassadors were always bribed, entertained so nobly, and left the French court so well satisfied, that no exceptions could be taken, tho the answers of Louis were always uncertain, in order to gain time, assuring them, that in a few days he would send an embassy of his own, that would satisfy their master in every point.' Ib. p. 9.

BOOK IV. invited Edward to share the spoil with him. Edward did not disdain the partition ; but wished Picardy, which adjoined Calais, instead of Flanders and Brabant, that had to be conquered, for his part. Louis preferred Picardy, for the same reasons which made the king of England desire it. And the heiress of Burgundy, finding herself between two plunderers, was advised to marry the archduke of Austria, to save some part of her pillaged inheritance.³⁹

In 1480, Edward demanded of Louis the solemnization of the covenanted marriage;⁴⁰ and negotiated in behalf of the archduke;⁴¹ and projected a marriage between his heir apparent, Edward, and the heiress of Bretagne.⁴² But in 1481, doubts, too well founded, arose, whether the French king meant to fulfil this part of his contract. Edward had long been warned, that Louis was not sincere on this point. The ambassadors from the Austrian archduke, who had wedded the heiress of Burgundy, and those from Bretagne, strongly urged him to mistrust the French king, and to oppose his appropriation of Picardy.⁴³ Edward and his queen were so intent on this settlement for their daughter, that they would not question the assurances of Louis, till they received the news, that the archduke's daughter had been finally selected, that France might have a chance of inheriting the

³⁹ On the distress and conduct of this princess, see Comines, 1. p. 452. 469; v. 2. p. 1-3. and 13-23. She died in the fourth year after her marriage, after a fall from her horse. p. 21.

⁴⁰ On the 24th August 1480, he appointed commissioners to make this requisition. 12 Rym. 135.

⁴¹ In August 1481, Edward made an alliance with him, on condition of receiving from him the 50,000 crowns, if differences with Louis should suspend his payments; and he engaged to obtain of Louis a truce for the Low Countries, or to make war. 12 Rym. 123-133. He appointed a fleet to assist. Ib. 135.

⁴² Comines, v. 2. p. 68.

rich provinces of Burgundy. Edward's luxurious habits, by unfitting his body for war, had favored the self-delusion, and in 1482, both the pension and alliance disappeared. His indignation at the deceit and disappointment roused him to resolve on a vindictive descent on France. Parliament was appealed to, and concurred; but not venturing to solicit its supplies, he exerted his influence with the clergy, and their convocation made a liberal grant.⁴⁴ War-like preparations were immediately commenced; and as that revengeful irritability, which formed one of Edward's increasing vices, now governed him,⁴⁵ all the desolations of an unsparing war would have overspread France, and its fierce preparations and pursuit have perverted the English mind, and checked the better tastes and studies that were beginning to enlighten and to humanize it, if the superior government of human affairs had not, by one single incident, produced a different issue. In the midst of the king's earnest attentions to collect a competent force, a disease, one of the personal results of his voluptuous life, suddenly attacked him at Easter; and on the 9th of April 1483,⁴⁶ before he had completed the forty-first year of his age,⁴⁷ he unexpectedly

CHAP.
V.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.1483.
Edward
dies,
9 April.

⁴⁴ The Croyland doctor greatly regrets this concession: ‘ O servile permicuum exitium ecclesie.’ 563.

⁴⁵ His immediate executions of the opposing nobility and gentry, whom he captured in his latter battles, shew his vindictive temper. Comines informs us, that it was his custom, when the victory was decided, to mount on horseback, and ride over the field, exhorting his men to save the common soldiers, but to put the gentry to the sword. p. 251. But in his battle of Towton, he ordered the common men not to be spared.

⁴⁶ Croyl. 564.

⁴⁷ He was born 28th April 1442. W. Wyr. 462. That vexation, at finding himself overreached by Louis, may have assisted to derange his health, is probable. It was then the general opinion, that it killed him. Com. p. 71. That his festivities in France had given him a tertian ague, which now turned to a quartan, with an indissoluble melancholy, and a continual cold, is mentioned by Hall, p. 338. That a surfeit, from the

BOOK
IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

expired ; exhorting his divided court, family, and cabinet council, to peace and harmony.⁵⁰ His brother Richard was at that time in the north, returning from his Scottish expedition.⁵¹

Edward had greatly desired and assiduously labored to ally his daughters with the princes of Europe ;⁵² but his premature death frustrated all the prospects of his parental pride. Excepting Elizabeth, the eldest, who gave with herself the best title to the throne of England, they were content to take their husbands from its rival aristocracy.⁵³

Edward's
character.

The soul of Edward IV. united the most inconsistent qualities. At times an intellectual vigor flamed within him, that transcended all his competitors. Most daring in valor, tremendous in battle, and unexampled in English history for the frequency and completeness of his victories, the numbers or characters of his opponents, even when superior to his own,

indulgencies of a banquet, was the last immediate cause of his death, is the most credible.—*Habington*, p. 478.

⁵⁰ More ascribes to him a long speech on this subject. He may have expressed briefly such wishes, but not in the methodical or lengthy oration of sir Thomas. p. 158-161.

⁵¹ Disappointed at James III. the king of Scotland's son, not marrying his daughter Cecil, and provoked by his breaking his truce, on the solicitations of Louis XI., Edward signed a treaty with James's brother, the duke of Albany, and sent Richard, in June 1482, with an army into Scotland, to place Albany on the throne, and to annul the alliance between France and Scotland. Richard invested Berwick, and marched to Edinburgh, while his fleet, under sir Robert Ratcliffe, assisted his movements. Possessed of that city, he negotiated with the Scottish prelates and nobility. It was agreed, that Berwick should be surrendered ; that the money received by James for Cecil's portion should be returned ; that Albany should be reinstated in his possessions, and pardoned ; and that Margaret, the king of Scotland's sister, should be married to lord Rivers, the queen's brother. See the public papers in *Rymer*, v. 12. pp. 115, 7. 139, 140. 156-171.

⁵² Besides those of Elizabeth to the dauphin, and Cecil to the Scottish prince, he commissioned persons, both in 1479 and 1482, to contract for Catherine to the infant of Spain, *Rym.* 110, and 146; and agreed to give Anne to the son of the archduke and of the heiress of Burgundy. p. 110.

⁵³ Cecil married viscount Wells ; Anne, the duke of Norfolk ; and Catherine, the earl of Devonshire. Bridget became a nun.

CHAP.
V.REIGN OF
EDW. IV:

seemed only to multiply his energies, and ensure his successes. Never calculating or caring for the comparison of forces, or for the fame, veteran experience, skill, or resolution of his adversaries ; he fought them the moment he could reach them, whoever they were, and whatever might be their strength, or however posted—and victory, even when least probable, always came, as if enchanted, to his banner. The fields of Barnet, Towton, and Tewkesbury, and his recovery of his lost crown, are splendid instances, that neither superiority of numbers, nor able generalship, nor the opposing chances of unfavorable circumstances, availed against him. Yet, altho endowed with this extraordinary power of chaining, as it were, the fortune of war, and life's proudest greatness, to his standard ; the paths of human slaughter, thro which only he obtained and preserved his crown, and from which worldly glory always flowed so lavishly upon him, even in his almost beardless youth, were neither his choice, his ambition, nor his taste. Tho fully equal to confront and master all the sublime horrors, and to supply all the wonderful exertions, of the most obstinate battle ; and tho darting into it with eagerness, as if its storm and lightnings had been his native element, and his heart's dearest delight ; yet no sooner had he secured the triumph, than, as if disdaining and mocking what he had defied danger and death to acquire, the invincible hero transformed himself into the merry huntsman, or to the boon, effeminate, and thoughtless reveller. The uproar and groans of war, the exulting clarions, the national shouts of wild applause, and the compliments of admiring reason, had scarcely ceased their vibrations, when he flew from pursuing fame and regal gran-

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

deur; from pomp and acclamation, from neighing steeds, blazoned shields, rejoicing trumpets, and venerating nobles, to relax and luxuriate under the greenwood trees, with the mellow horn and the sylvan echoes of the chace; or to trifle amid lutes and minstrels,⁵² in jessamined bowers or stately halls, with the living rose of the human countenance, or with the pensive beauty of its absence: happier from displaying a fine person in a gaudy robe, or from the animal enjoyments of a sated palate, than from exploits and renown, which few conquerors have merited or surpassed. He had scarcely soared to the highest regions of human glory, than he chose to abase himself to the debility and vulgar level of sensual luxuriousness.⁵³ He was the ancient knight of invincible bravery, stepping down from his exalted pedestal to be the gay companion, the elegant coxcomb, and the voluptuous gentleman.⁵⁴ He neither sought nor valued power for its gorgeous state or lordly command; but because he disliked inferiority, loved to be active, and wished to be praised. He was never arrogant, presuming, nor ambitious, tho' he had fought and conquered in nine pitched battles. No man ever rushed more cheerily to the conflict at the first sound of danger's trumpet, who was more

⁵² Edward was very liberal to his minstrels. To John Clyff, 'mareschal of the office of our minstrels,' he gave an annuity of ten marcs, and the like sum to six other minstrels. 6 Parl. Rolls, p. 89. His tailor had a shilling a day, and five pounds a year for his house. Ib. 87. His name implies him to have been a foreigner—'Guilielmus Pault.'

⁵³ Comines says, he indulged himself in a larger share of ease and pleasures than any prince in his time. p. 252. Hence, perhaps, it was, that Warwick, as he says, looked on him as a very weak prince, p. 242; and Comines deemed him a man of no great management or foresight. Ib. 246.

⁵⁴ He used to say that he had three concubines, who excelled in three distinct properties. One was the merriest; another the wiliest; the third, the holiest harlot in his kingdom. The two last were greater personages; the first was Jane Shore. More, p. 212.

delighted to forget all that he had achieved, and to throw off his coat of mail for the silken robes of peace and courtesy; becoming, as if from innate instinct, the easy, pleasing, free, enjoying, laughing, gallant, and liberal friend, lover, and associate.⁶⁶ Perhaps this combination of unexcelled valor and achievements, with all the blandishments and relaxing habits of the most indolent and refined voluptuary, tended more to dispossess the sturdy fighting spirit of ancient chivalry of its popularity, imitation and fame, than all that wisdom or religion could have devised or attempted. He made those enervating and mind-changing habits fashionable and creditable, which were inconsistent with that bravery, strength, personal vigor, habitual dexterity, and desperate courage, which were essential to the true knight of battle. And the new character suiting better the new cultivation of intellect, and emerging moral sense, that were then dawning in society, the English gentleman began to emancipate himself from the fierce spirit of the warrior, and to undervalue his barbaric taste, and sanguinary occupations.

Edward's bodily gratifications⁶⁶ ruined his health, destroyed his personal beauty,⁶⁷ depressed his spirits,

⁶⁶ The account of the personal observations of Comines is, 'His thoughts were wholly employed upon the ladies, on hunting and on dressing. In his summer's hunting, his custom was to have tents set up for the ladies, where he treated them after a splendid and magnificent manner.' Ib. He was so devoted to his amusements, that when Warwick's invasion impended, he did not concern himself about it, but followed his hunting pleasures. More, 249.

⁶⁷ The doctor of Croyland describes him as devoted 'sodalitis, vanitatis, crapulis, luxui,' and 'cupiditatibus,' 564; and also, 'cupiditatibus et luxui nimis intemperanter indulsisse.' Ib.

⁶⁸ Comines, who knew him, twice mentions, that he was the most beautiful prince that he had ever seen, or of his time, 246 and 252; but after his restoration, he grew very corpulent, 252. Croyland also mentions this un beautifying circumstance: 'homine tam corpulento.' 49.

BOOK
IV.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

enervated his soul, extinguished his patriotism, degraded his reputation, and abridged his life. His last years exhibited all their deleterious effects. He allowed Louis XI. to aggrandize France, to the peril both of England and Europe. He lowered himself to seek distinction by gaudy and effeminate apparel.⁵⁶ Having benefited himself by the assistance of the friends of the reformation, his indolence allied him to the church, and he then abetted the persecutions of an hierarchy rather revengeful than bigotted.⁵⁷ His administrative vigilance was also degenerating into inquisitorial severity.⁵⁸ Yet so much talent emerged in his government, amid all his voluptuous relaxations, that the nation increased in strength, riches, intellect, civilization, and literature, during his reign :⁵⁹ and even his vices could not make him unpopular. A personal courtesy, and even kindness of temper, often added the affection of his subjects to their loyalty ; and displayed the right-hearted character of a noble mind.⁶⁰ He was steady in the

⁵⁶ At the Christmas festivities before his death, he appeared in a variety of most costly dresses, of a form never seen before, which he thought displayed his person to superior advantage. Croyl. 563.

⁵⁷ 'Hereticorum severissimus hostis,' Croyl. 564; and after his restoration, we find in 1474, one John Goos, a loller, burnt at Tower Hill, for heresy. Fabian, 507.

⁵⁸ After Clarence's death, that he might be 'ab omnibus incolis formidari,' he distributed in all parts of the realm, in the custodies of the castles, manors, forests and parks, trusty persons, that nothing might be done, even by the greatest, without his immediate knowledge. Croyl. 562.

⁵⁹ Altho he found his kingdom greatly impoverished, and almost empty, both of men and money, he left it in all things rich and abundant. Hall, p. 341. Like Henry V. he was interested by the wars in the holy land ; and hence Caxton translated the *Acts and Life of Godfrey of Bologne*, to please him. Pref. to King Arthur.

⁶⁰ Fabian gives two instances of this. In July 1481, the king invited the mayor and part of the corporation to a hunt in Waltham forest, and feasted them with a rich dinner and wine, in a bower of green boughs, and gave them plenty of venison at parting. The next month, he sent two harts and six bucks to the wives of the mayor and aldermen, with a tun of wine to drink with them. p. 512. Hall remarks, that his cour-

CHAP.
V.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

1471.

observances of ceremonial religion,⁵³ tho' unable to govern himself by its morality. He was formed to be a great king, and he submitted to become a common one ; rivalling only the reveller and voluptuary, and qualifying himself rather to be the companion of a Falstaff, than to place himself with the illustrious of all ages, who have obtained undying glory, by preferring, like Hercules, virtue to pleasure, self-government to self-indulgence, and the admiration of the wise and noble, to the flattery of the courtesan, the epicure, the parasite and the buffoon. The lights and shades of his character were each strongly marked ; and among his redeeming, yet inconsistent qualities, his affectionate attachment to his family circle, made his follies and frailties more conspicuous, more censurable, more surprising, and more regretted.⁵⁴ He knew and felt where true happiness dwelt, and yet he wandered from it, to perish prematurely by his infatuated mistake.⁵⁵

The education of his son, had been an object of

tesy, lowliness and familiarity were so great, that they occasioned the suspicion that he was poisoned. 341.

⁵³ Croyl. 564. Thus in September 1471, we find, 'the king and queen are ridden and gone to Canterbury on pilgrimage;' 2 Fenn, 83; and in Feb. 1472, 'the king, queen, and Gloucester are gone to Sheen to pardon.' Ib. 91.

⁵⁴ Sir Thomas More says of him, that no prince was so heartily beloved by his people, nor was he so especially loved, as, at the time of his death, and that even some of the friends of Henry VI. had grown into his favor. He says he was of 'a goodly personage, and very princely to behold; of visage lovely; of body mighty; strong and clean made. Howbeit, in his latter days, with over liberal diet, somewhat corpulent, and boorly, yet not uncomely;' and that 'albeit, all his reign he was with his people so benign, courteous and familiar, that no part of his virtues was more esteemed, yet that this quality, in the end of his days, marvellously in him grew and increased.' p. 150, 1.

⁵⁵ Hollingshead mentions an incident, which intimates his attractive manners. He asked a rich old lady, what she would give him towards the war. Interested by his person and address, she said, 'For thy lovely face, thou shalt have twenty pounds;' being twice as much as the king expected. He thanked, and kissed her.

BOOK IV. his tenderest care and wisest judgment. He had appointed the most accomplished nobleman in his court, earl Rivers, his queen's brother, to be the governor of this prince ; and in the last year of his life, but six weeks before he died, or had any expectation of dying, he settled the rules for his son's daily conduct and studies. These display all a father's anxiety for his improvement, and a minuteness of attention, to lead him to habits that would be most beneficial, and to remove all that could injure.⁶⁶ What paternal judgment could provide to make the future happy to his child, he endeavored to secure. It is only to

⁶⁶ These are preserved in the Sloane MS. in the British Museum, No. 3479. They display part of the best customs of the gentlemen of the day :

1. He shall arise every morning at a convenient time, and till he be ready, none but earl Rivers, his chamberlain, or chaplain, to enter his chamber, and one other chaplain to sing mattins, then to go to his chapel or chamber, to hear mass.
2. That he hear, every holiday, divine service.
3. That on principal feasts, sermons be preached before him.
4. That he breakfast immediately after mass, and be occupied an hour at his school before he go to meat, and to be at his dinner at a convenient hour, and that to be reasonably served, and his dishes borne by worshipful folk wearing our livery.
5. That no man sit at his board but as earl Rivers shall allow ; and that there be read before him noble stories, as behoveth a prince to understand ; and that the communication, at all times in his presence, be of virtue, honor, cunning, wisdom, and deeds of worship, and of nothing that shall move him to vice.
6. After his meat, in eschewing of idleness, that he be occupied two hours at his school ; and after, in his presence, to be shewed all such convenient disports and exercises as belong to his estate to have experience in.
7. To go to his evening song at a convenient hour ; and soon after that to be at his supper.
8. After supper, that he have all such honest disports as may be conveniently devised for his recreation.
9. That he be in his chamber, and for all night ; and the travers to be drawn by nine of the clock, and all persons then from thence to be avoided, except for attendance.
10. That sure and good watch be nightly had and kept about his person for safeguard.
11. That discreet and convenient persons be appointed to give attendance on his person, from his rising to his going to bed. Some other orders follow, for the regulation of his household and chapel. MS. N° 3479.

be lamented, that he himself yielded to indulgencies, which so immediately curtailed his own life, as to destroy the effect of all his prospective wisdom, and to plunge all that he most loved, into irretrievable calamity.²⁷

CHAP.
V.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

²⁷ The new fashion that he chose for the last state dresses was, to have very full hanging sleeves, like a monk's, lined with the most sumptuous furs, and so rolled over his shoulders, as to give his tall person an air of peculiar grandeur. Croyl. 563. He gave so much attention to dress, as to procure an act, making it the mark of every one's quality, and keeping down the inferior degrees from intruding on the splendor of the upper classes. Thus it was, in his last year, enacted, that none but the royal family should wear any cloth of gold, or silk, of a purple color. None, under a duke, any cloth of gold or tissue: none, under a lord, any plain cloth of gold: none, under a knight, any velvet, nor damask or satin, in their gowns: none, under an esquire or gentleman, any damask or satin in their doublets, nor gowns of camlet: none, under a lord, any woollen cloth made out of England, nor furs of sables. No labourer, servant, or artificer, were to have any cloth above two shillings a yard; but this act was not to extend to any woman, but the wives of the latter. Stat. of Realm, v. 2. p. 469. Thus the rank of every one was known immediately by his clothes.

REIGN OF EDWARD THE FIFTH.

1483. 9 APRIL—26 JUNE.

C H A P. VI.

Prejudices against RICHARD III.—Review of the State of the Nobility of England at this time—Its various Classes and chief Leaders—Their rival Interests—The Knights of England—The Clergy—Violent Spirit of the Country.

BOOK
IV.

1483.

IN the brief reign of this prince, the violent spirit and habits of the higher classes of England, in the middle ages, appeared in their most daring and mischievous exertion; but by evincing so palpably, the moral deformity of a character so pernicious to society, contributed to its future degradation, and to its rapid disappearance from the English mind and history. The nobility patronized such deeds no more: and a new moral sensibility softened and improved both the heart and conduct, after the reign and fall of Richard III. He carried the unshinking temper, fierce selfishness, and proud ambition of the European aristocracy, at that time, to their worst consequences; and thereby startled mankind into a perception and abhorrence of the criminality, and of the evils of such deadly struggles; such sanguinary resentments; such rapacity, cruelty and violence. The world has been often thus benefited by the extreme actions of wrong principles.

From an eagerness in the Tudor princes, and their partisans, to destroy all public sympathy for Richard III. and the line of York, which he had headed, and which others, after him, survived to represent; no part of our history has been more disfigured by passion, prejudice, injustice, and inaccuracy, than the two reigns of Edward V. and Richard III. To make the memory of the latter an execration among mankind, appears to have been a favorite object of the court and conversation of Henry VII., and of the chroniclers whom his successors patronized: and to achieve this end, most of the actions of Richard III. have been mistated, and his motives blackened. What he did that was evil has been exaggerated, and his proper conduct vilified and distorted.¹ His reign was too short for writers, during that space to have flourished, who would have truly described it; and after his fall, it would have been deemed infamous and treasonable, and might have been dangerous to the then reigning dynasty, to have represented him in his just and fair proportions. The want of impartial documents makes it difficult, if not impossible, now to give his true history.² Yet some new facts may be rescued from our old materials, which will enable us to

CHAP.
VI.
REIGN OF
EDW. V.

¹ Sir Thomas More, Hall, Grafton, and Shakspere, with many less known persons, have attached to his memory all that is most base and revolting, and have been indiscriminately followed by the chief writers of English history. Bucke attempted, above a century ago, to stop the stream of abuse; but his work was too feeble, and too random, to have any effect. It was lord Orford that first caused the public mind to begin to hesitate on Richard's defamation, in his 'Historic Doubts on Richard III.'; but as he wrote with the spirit of a partisan, and without sufficient materials, he rather roused the attention, than satisfied the judgment. Both Hume, in his Appendix, and Gibbon, in his French review of this book (*Miscel. Works* 3. p. 331,) read, praised, criticised, but differed from Walpole.

² I consider the monk of Croyland, his contemporary, to have left the most exact account of his actions; and only regret, that the chronicler has mentioned them so sparingly, and so concisely. His 'Continuatio' is in the 2 Gale Script.

BOOK
IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

take a juster review, and to form a sounder judgment on this depreciated man, without either partiality or paradox. Modern criticism, averse alike to fable and to rhetoric, wishes history neither to defame nor to blazon; but to explore and narrate the simple truth, wherever it is penetrable, or attainable, unvarnished and untwisted, with no disingenuous suppression, and without any political subserviency. On this principle, the present History has been attempted; and it has been our peculiar endeavor to apply it to the reigns of Edward V. and Richard III., anxious neither to be deceived, nor to deceive.

It is the supposition of sir Thomas More,³ and was the belief of his Tudor friends, that Richard framed, immediately on his brother's death, all the vile schemes and deeds which he afterwards perpetrated; but that he concealed and prosecuted them with an art and an hypocrisy, the most assiduous and deeply veiled. It may have been so. There is no natural impossibility in the circumstance. But the charge must either be an inference of his antagonists, from the events they knew, and have communicated, or a fact revealed to the world spontaneously by himself. That Richard, at any time, made such a confession, is no where pretended.⁴ The idea of his consummate hypocrisy has arisen from the impenetrable mask that always covered his interior thoughts. The suggestion therefore must be considered, as the opinion which cardinal Morton,⁵ and his sovereign and friends,

³ I shall quote More's English History, from Mr. Cayley's edition of it, in the second volume of his Life and Works.

⁴ Walpole acutely observes, 'Whatever Morton might tell More, of the plots of Henry of Richmond, the archbishop was certainly not intrusted with the secrets of Richard.' p. 46.

⁵ As Morton died in 1500, and More was born in 1482, he must have

thought to be the most probable ; and if they had not been interested, by every motive of human aggrandizement and profit, to cherish and diffuse such a belief, the deduction of their personal experience, and contemporary reasoning, would have carried with it a force of impression that might be considered nearly equivalent to evidence. But as their inferences may have been their prejudices, their passion, their policy, or their self-interest,⁶ and are counteracted by the popularity and support which Richard received until his nephews disappeared ; and by the regard with which, after his fall, his memory was cherished by many of his friends, it may approach nearer to the historical truth, if we narrate the events without this theory of original villany, and leave it to the reader to annex it, or not, as his own judgment prefers. Perhaps all that occurred, will be found to be satisfactorily accounted for, without an imputation, which it may be as unjust to affirm, as it would be partial positively to deny. The public and visible circumstances which occurred, and the natural probabilities that, from our usual experience of human nature, we may fairly attach to them, are all that now ought to influence our historical judgment, in estimating, or describing this almost proverbed king. When the whole truth of the case is temperately considered, instead of Richard being regarded as some peculiar monstrosity of human nature, it may be doubted, if any nobleman of his court, tho not born with teeth,⁷ would, under the same

had the information which he derived from this prelate before he was twenty, unless he wrote from Morton's work on Richard III.

⁶ Walpole asks, ' Could More have drawn from a more corrupted source ? Of all men living, there could not be a more suspicious testimony than the prelate's, except the king's. Who had so much interest to blacken Richard, as the man who had risen to be prime minister to his rival ? p. 18.

⁷ More, p. 154, and Shakspeare.

BOOK IV. circumstances, dangers, inducements, and impulses, have acted otherwise. Such was the aristocracy of that period, and so great have been its improvements in England since. It would then have hung, burnt, drowned, stabbed, or beheaded, a witch, an heretic, an enemy, or a rival, with pleasure, and as a duty. It now consigns these actions to the base and brutal portion of mankind.

REIGN OF EDW. V.

State of the nobility. At the death of Edward IV. the aristocracy of England was distinguishable into four classes—1st, The queen's relations and friends ; 2d, The nobles in the king's household and administration ; 3d, Those who desired to participate in official dignities ; and 4th, The unemployed and unambitious remainder. A cursory review of the leading individuals of these different descriptions, and of their designs and interests, will enable us better to understand the two succeeding reigns, which are usually depicted as an unintelligible scene of moral confusion and absurd flagitiousness.

1st. The queen's relations were, her brother earl Rivers, and some younger Woodvilles : her sons, by her first husband, who had been created marquis Dorset, and lord Richard Grey ; and her brother-in-law lord Lyle.

Earl Rivers.

Of these, RIVERS was an accomplished, active and superior character. He excelled in all the chivalry of the day, and had been successively appointed by Edward IV. governor of the Isle of Wight; constable of England, after his father's death ; captain of the king's armed power ; knight of the garter ; the chief butler of England ; and the governor of the prince's household.⁸ In 1471, he is noticed as about to go against the infidels ;⁹ and in 1473, he went on that

⁸ See Calend. Rotul. p. 312-18.

⁹ Ib. 316.

pilgrimage to St. James of Compostella,¹⁰ which was then so fashionable. In his voyage, he amused himself with translating “the Dictes or Sayenges of Philosophers,” which Caxton printed¹¹ four years afterwards. In 1476, we find him at Rome, returning from which place he was robbed. He aspired to the hand of the heiress of Burgundy, but was rejected as too inferior;¹² and in 1482, a few months before Edward died, he was so favored by his royal brother-in-law, that he was about to marry the king of Scotland’s daughter.¹³ Besides being intrusted with the education and care of the prince whom he was training at Ludlow, he had the command of Shrewsbury and the adjoining part of Wales.¹⁴ He possessed, therefore, the full confidence, the preferring regard,

¹⁰ He says of himself, ‘Understanding there was to be a jubilee and pardon at St. James, 1473, in Spain, he determined on a voyage thither.’ Caxton’s *Dictes*. Oldys, 6 Brit. lib. 65. Pilgrims were so respected, that when a ship’s crew had taken some persons who were walking by the sea side, as soon as they found one to be a pilgrim, they gave him money, and set him again on the land. Fenn, p. 305.

¹¹ This was the first book from his press, with the year and place subjoined; Ames, Typ. 1 Dibdin, 104; ‘imprinted by W. Caxton, at West. 1477.’ The MS. has an illumination, representing Edward IV. his son, and queen; and Rivers, presenting his book to the king. The earl mentions it thus: ‘In July, in the same year, he set sail from Southampton, when a worshipful gentleman in his company lent him, to pass over the time, the book of the *Sayings of the Philosophers*, in French. He was much affected by the wholesome and sweet sayings therein of the Paynims; but as he could not, in all that pilgrimage, ever see it well, at his pleasure, through the dispositions that belong to the taker of a jubilee or pardon, and the great acquaintance he found thereof worshipful folk, he intended, at a more convenient time, to be better acquainted with it.’ The earl adds, ‘Remaining in this opinion, after the king commanded him to attend upon the prince, and having then leisure, he translated it into English, which had not been done before.’ It is remarkable, that from his taste, or gallantry, Rivers omitted the last part, containing the sarcasms against the female sex, which Caxton, to make the work complete, supplied. Oldys, p. 65.

¹² 2 Fenn, p. 200. *Comines*, v. 2. p. 11.

¹³ This is mentioned in two documents in *Rymer*, vol. 12. One, 22 August 1482, p. 162; and the other, dated 14 December, p. 171.

¹⁴ We have his ordinances made for the government of Shrewsbury, in 1478, in the Cotton. MS. *Vitell.* c. 1.

BOOK
IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

Marquis
Dorset.

and the complete disposal of Edward V. at the critical moment of his accession, and at the same time, the power of assembling all the forces of South Wales, to support the line of politics which the young king should adopt.¹⁵ From these circumstances, he was in a position that naturally ensured him to become the head of the future government, especially if the queen should be made regent.

His nephew, LORD RICHARD GREY, was with him at Ludlow, an appointed counsellor of the prince;¹⁶ while his elder nephew, THOMAS, remained in London with the queen, watching and promoting all the interests and ambition of her family. This gentleman had been rapidly advanced by his royal father-in-law. He was first created earl of Huntingdon, and four years afterwards, marquis Dorset;¹⁷ altho then so young, that in the last year of Edward the fourth's reign, he was put in possession of his lands without proof of his being of age,¹⁸ an evidence that he had then scarcely attained it. But yet the important office of governor of the Tower was committed to him, which gave him the military command of the metropolis; and what was no less important, of the king's treasure, which was there deposited.¹⁹ He was one of the lords who attended Edward's funeral.²⁰ But if he was but 21, at the death of Edward, his brother,

¹⁵ More remarks, that Gloucester complained of the sovereign being sequestered in the hands and custody of his mother's kindred. p. 162.

¹⁶ Sloane MS. No. 3479. The queen had recently paid 2000 marks for him, and several manors were given to him. R. Parl. 6. p. 217.

¹⁷ He was made earl 11 Edw. IV. and marquis on 18 April, 15 Ed. 4. 1 Dugg. Baron. 719, and Pol. Virgil.

¹⁸ It was in 22 Ed. IV. he had this livery of his lands. Dugg. Baron. 719. ¹⁹ More, 167.

²⁰ Harl. MS. 6. 111. Edward had given to him the marriage and wardship of Edward, the son and heir of the duke of Clarence. Cal. Rot. 325. Thus he had the commanding influence over all this property and its dependants.

lord Richard Grey, must have been still younger. LORD LYLE was another Grey ennobled by Edward. He was a brother of the queen's first husband.²¹

The prince's household at Ludlow, besides Rivers and Grey, consisted also of sir Thomas Vaughan, an aged gentleman of great influence in Wales, his chamberlain;²² sir William Stanley, steward of his household, and brother of lord Stanley; and two prelates and other officers.²³ Hence the party of the queen's friends, besides the actual possession of the new king's attachment, and therefore the direction of his authority, had a considerable portion of the great dignities and power of the country.²⁴

2. Of the nobles who were seated in official power, the most important were, of the spiritual lords, the chancellor, Rotherham archbishop of York; Dr. Russell, bishop of Lincoln, the privy seal;²⁵ Morton, bishop of Ely;²⁶ Stillington, bishop of Bath and

CHAP.
VI.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

²¹ Dugd. Bar. 1. p. 719.

²² And treasurer of the king's chamber. Cal. Rot. 318. 323.

²³ Sloane MS. No. 3479. Sir Richard Crofts was his treasurer, and Richard Hurst, esq. treasurer of his household. The prelates were, the bishop of St. David's, his chancellor, and Alcock, bishop of Worcester, the president of his council. MS. ib. The latter was highly celebrated in his day.

²⁴ Lionel Woodville, the queen's other surviving brother, was a clergyman; had been archdeacon of Norwich, Cal. Rot. 323, and was then a bishop. There was also a sir Edward Woodville, and a sir Richard Woodville, relations of the queen, who are occasionally mentioned.

²⁵ This clergyman's name is connected with the earliest history of English typography. He was sent ambassador by Edward IV. to compliment the duke of Burgundy, on his receiving the order of the garter. His 'Propositio' on this occasion, was printed by Caxton in 1469 or 1470. One copy of it only now remains, consisting of five leaves. A bookseller, who bought it for 2*l.* 5*s.* sold it to the present duke of Marlborough for fifty guineas, and at the sale of his books it was purchased by earl Spencer for 120 guineas.

²⁶ He was at first attached to the interest of queen Margaret, and sailed with her from the north to Flanders, W. Wyr. 495, but was pardoned by Edward IV. in 1472. 6 Rolls Parl. 26. He went with him to France; and in 1476 was keeper of the rolls in chancery, and appointed, with lord Howard, an ambassador to negotiate with Louis XI. Edward made him bishop of Ely. Cal. Rot. 321. 323. He was one of those who took

BOOK IV. Wells; and Alcock, bishop of Worcester, the king's preceptor; and of the temporal peers, Hastings, Stanley, and Lovel.

REIGN OF EDW. V.

Lord Hastings.

HASTINGS had first emerged into public notice, under the patronage of Edward's father, the duke of York.²⁷ He became so great a favorite with several of the nobility, in the year of Edward's accession, as to have from them many valuable grants of lands and money.²⁸ The king rapidly promoted him, and employed him on embassies. He assisted Edward's escape from the Warwicks, at Middleham; fled with him on his retreat into Flanders; and commanded 3000 horse on his side, at the deciding and perilous battle of Barnet. As a favorite and chief adviser of Edward, he was selected by the wily Louis XI. for an object of his gifts and pensions. He obtained several beneficial stewardships; married Katherine, the earl of Salisbury's daughter; and was appointed by Edward, the lord chamberlain of his own household, and of North Wales;²⁹ and also governor of Calais and Guynes,³⁰ the greatest station and deposit of the military forces of England. The list of the persons of quality, who freely served under him, when he accompanied Edward on his French expedition, attests his popularity and influence.³¹ He was the most reluctant of Edward's court, to take the

stipends from the French king, under Edward IV. being then master of the rolls. Comines, v. 2. p. 6.

²⁷ In 1455, the duke appointed him ranger of Ware, in Salop; and the next year made him a grant of 10*l.* a year, with the marking designation of 'My beloved servant William Hastings.'—1 Dugd. Baronage, 580.

²⁸ Dugdale particularizes those from the duchess of Buckingham, from her eldest son, from J. lord Lovell, and from the queen's father and mother, besides others. Ib. 580.

²⁹ Cal. Rot. 299. 302. 309, 310. 318, 319, 320; and see Dugd. Baron. 1.p. 580-3. ³⁰ Croyl. 564.

³¹ It comprises 2 lords, 9 knights, 58 esquires, and 20 gentlemen.—Dugd. 583.

French bribes, but he yielded to their temptation, tho he is praised by Comines for his singular wisdom and virtue.²²

CHAP.
VI.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.
Lord
Stanley.

STANLEY had married a sister of the great earl of Warwick; but notwithstanding his importunity, had refused to take up arms against Edward IV. as he had evaded the orders of Margaret and Henry, to attack the friends of the duke of York. This conduct ensured him the confidence and attachment of Edward, who appointed him steward of his household, took him into France, in his army, and in the last year of his life, sent him with the duke of Gloucester into Scotland. A little before Edward died, he had the command of Gloucester's right wing, and distinguished himself by taking Berwick by assault. He married, for his second wife, not long before Edward died, Margaret, the duchess of Richmond, whose son, by her first husband, became Henry VII.²³ His character was high, his conduct had been always moderate and honorable, and his influence was proportionate with his believed honor, calm courage, soldierly knowlege, and personal respectability.

FRANCIS LORD LOVEL was another nobleman whom Edward raised to this peerage, a short time before he died; and who attended Gloucester to his Scottish campaign.²⁴

Lord
Lovel.

²² Comines, who had prevailed on him to be one of Burgundy's pensioners of 1000 crowns a year, was employed, and successfully, to induce him to take Lewis's doubled annuity of 2000 crowns. The author says, 'It was with great difficulty and solicitation, that he was made one of the French king's pensioners; but Peter Cleret being privately admitted into his house in London, presented the 2000 crowns in gold, "for to foreign lords of great quality the king never gave any thing else." Comines, p. 8; and see before, in this vol. p. 332.

²³ Dugd. Baron. v. 2. p. 248. Pol. Virg.

²⁴ Made lord Lovel 4 Jan. 22 Ed. IV. Dugd. Bar. 1. p. 560. Oliver King was Edward's secretary at his death, and sir John Ebrington

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

3d. Of the unemployed, but aspiring nobility, the greatest in rank, and who became the most active in exertion, was HENRY DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM. He was the son of the former duke's eldest child and heir, who had fallen at the first battle of St. Albans.²⁵ The preceding duke, his grandfather, had been very warlike, and so successful in his ambitious attentions to Suffolk, and afterwards to queen Margaret, as to obtain the high military grant of the captainship of Calais, and to be raised from earl to duke, by Henry VI.²⁶ The king had also elevated his governor Warwick to the same dignity, with the declaration of his precedence; but the aspiring pride of the Buckingham family, was evinced by the new duke contesting the priority of Warwick. Such great animosities arose on this point as to disturb the king; and they were only appeased by a special act of parliament, giving to each duke the precedence every alternate year.²⁷ Warwick dying two years afterwards, Buckingham obtained a royal grant for taking the lead of all dukes who should not be of the blood royal.²⁸ This haughty nobleman fell at the battle of Northampton, in 1460, leaving many children; but his grandson Henry succeeded to his title and estates, then not six years old. This young duke was committed, by Edward, to his sister the duchess of Exeter, to be by her reared, with an attachment to the York family.²⁹ He had been brought forward to the public eye, in his nomination, to superintend the execution of the duke of Clarence, and was about twenty-nine, at the accession of

treasurer of his household. R. Parl. 6. p. 221. Sir William Hussey was chief justice of the King's Bench. Ib. 209.

²⁵ Dugd. Baron. v. 1. p. 165, 167.

²⁶ Ib. v. 1. p. 164-6.

²⁷ Ib.

²⁸ Ib.

²⁹ Ib.

Edward V.; but in that day of jealous pride, grasping power, and family emulation, we cannot doubt that the ambition of his predecessors would become the character of his own mind; and that it was so, all his actions, after the death of Edward IV. most rapidly displayed. It is remarkable, that he had a near family connexion with the earl of Richmond and his mother. Before this lady married lord Stanley, she had been, by her second nuptials, the wife of Buckingham's uncle, sir Henry Stafford, who died at the latter end of 1481.⁴⁰ This peculiar position led to the events which destroyed himself, and raised Henry VII. to the throne.

Another nobleman, who had been confidentially employed by Edward IV. on his embassies to France,⁴¹ was JOHN LORD HOWARD, who, after the duke of Norfolk's sudden death, in 1476,⁴² and of his daughter Ann, some few years afterwards, became entitled to the possessions of this illustrious family. He was naturally an aspirant to the same ducal dignity which had accompanied this property; but two events put his interests, and perhaps his spirit, at variance with Edward's court and family. Ann, the former duke's heiress, had been married by Edward, at six years of age, to his son, the prince Richard; also but a child;⁴³ and to this young prince, created duke of York, a royal grant was made, vesting her lands in him.⁴⁴ When Ann, the baby heiress, died, and lord Howard

Lord
Howard.

⁴⁰ Sir Henry's will is dated 2 October 1481, by which he bequeathes to his son-in-law, the earl of Richmond, a trappure of four new horse harness of velvet. 1 Dugd. 167.

⁴¹ Cal. Rot. 321. Rym. Fœd. 12. pp. 14, 50, 113. On the menies which he received from the French king, see before, p. 331.

⁴² Fenn, Lett. 2. p. 186.

⁴³ The marriage was made in 1477. Rolls Parl. 6. p. 168.

⁴⁴ 6 Parl. 206. In 1482, she is mentioned as then dead. Ib.

BOOK IV. thereby became the legal heir to the Norfolk property, his interests, and those of the young duke of York, came into hostile competition. Another circumstance dissatisfied his mind. In 1478 he had been appointed constable of the Tower, for his life; ⁴⁵ and Edward afterwards superseded him, to appoint the marquis Dorset in his stead. Thus his disturbed spirit was directed or prepared to act against the queen's family, by whom he had been supplanted.

Earl of Oxford.

4th. The most distinguished person of the rest of the nobility was the **EARL OF OXFORD**. He had been a zealous and active warrior for Henry VI. and Margaret, and had much teased Edward, but at last was pardoned by him. Being afterwards committed to the castle at Harnes, on the French coast, he had attempted to escape by leaping from the walls into the ditch,⁴⁶ but was taken and continued a prisoner till Edward's death. Many other noblemen appeared on public occasions, whose interests and desires tended principally to the conservation of domestic peace, and to the discouragement or prevention of civil warfare.⁴⁷

Of the gentry who took a part, or came forward to the public eye, after Edward's death, were sir John Cheney, the master of his horse, sir Thomas Montgomery, one of his executors,⁴⁸ and sir Richard Ratcliffe.

⁴⁵ Cal. Rot. 323. Some of the manors of the duke of Clarence were then granted to him. Ib. ⁴⁶ 2 Fenn, 149.

⁴⁷ Of the other noblemen, we find mentioned, as attending parliament or court, or acting at this time, the earls Lincoln, Arundel and Huntingdon, viscount Berkeley, and the lords Dacre, Dudley, Burgenny, Audley, Cobham, Wells. It may be remarked, that soon after Edward the Fifth's birth, all the chief spiritual and temporal peers swore to take him for king, if he should outlive his father. Among them were Gloucester, Norfolk, Buckingham, Hastings and Howard. Parl. Rolls, 6. p. 234.

⁴⁸ Both these are mentioned by Comines, as partakers of the French

Amid these noblemen and gentlemen, some of CHAP.
great, and the others of much power and influence,
reputation, ability, independence, and high spirit ;
and under their impulses, and with their approbation,
or against their opposition, Richard had to act. This
view of the political state of the country, will shew at
once, that he had neither the freedom nor the power
to do as he pleased. He was surrounded and cir-
cumscribed in all his movements, by active and able
men ; and he could not, in any of his measures, effect
what he wished against the general will, nor without
the co-operation of the most leading men of the
country. The chains of circumstances and neces-
sities that surrounded him, and by some of which he
was governed, will appear more conspicuously when
we contemplate the views, passions, and interests of
these different bodies.

It was the queen and her family's wish, that they
should conduct the government of the country, and
enjoy its chief advantages, and if possible, under her
regency or their own.⁴⁹ The young king, brought
up under their tuition, could have no other feelings ;
and from his predilections, and their own situations,
and the active spirit of Rivers, supported as it was
by the command of South Wales, they appeared to
be certain of governing both the cabinet and the
kingdom. This prospect of power was more ensured
to them by the disposition of the dignified heads of
the clergy, who, from the chancellor archbishop to
the last of the episcopal bench, were disposed to

VI.
REIGN OF
EDW. V.

The parties
and oppos-
ing inter-
ests of the
great.

king's corrupting stipends. Comines, v. 2. p. 6. Ratcliffe had been
benefited by grants from Edward IV. See Parl. Rolls, 6. p. 80.

* Sir T. More remarks, that ' every one, as he was nearest of kin to
the queen, so was planted next about the prince.' p. 160. ' This drift
was not unwisely devised by the queen, whereby her blood might of youth
be rooted in the prince's favor.' p. 162.

BOOK IV. identify themselves with the royal power. Nothing was wanted to effectuate this political ambition, but the appearance of Edward V. and his late governor, in the metropolis, at the head of a force large enough to deter all opposition.

REIGN OF EDW. V. But against this arrangement of power, the two classes of the lay-official, and of the aspiring nobles, immediately presented themselves, from motives of personal safety, as well as of personal ambition: and all the rest of the more indifferent part of the aristocracy, who prided themselves on ancient ancestry and family celebrity, being adverse to the elevation of the queen's family of inferior birth, and of such recent greatness, gave their sanction, more or less avowed, to the opposition of the interested lords. The selfish views, and the irritated passions of the great English aristocracy, were therefore roused, and united against the queen and her family; and it was obvious that an immediate contest must succeed the burial of Edward IV. to determine whether Rivers, Dorset and Grey; or Hastings and Stanley, and Howard and Buckingham, should guide the young king, and direct the future government. If the duke of Gloucester had died before his brother, still this battle remained to be fought, and could not have been decided without the convulsion of a civil war, or the violence of anticipating murderous executions. Hastings, Stanley, Buckingham and Howard, at first moved in amicable concert, till the queen's friends were overthrown: and to produce this event, the interests of these noblemen, and their partisans, were in perfect union; tho' it is obvious, that as soon as that result should be attained, their future views would become as divergent. The clergy, who had

found Edward IV. at last, as obsequious to their possessed establishments as they could desire ; and some of whose chiefs were forming and influencing his son's mind, could not hope for any better event to themselves than his accession, under a continuation of the same predilections and impressions. Hence they attached themselves to the queen and her friends, at the outset, while the preponderance of this party was likely ; but being actuated greatly by policy, they were as ready to adhere to any other scheme of government which should be substituted instead, that bore to them a friendly aspect, and could protect them against the hostility which surrounded them.

CHAP.
VI.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

The duke of Gloucester was naturally looked up to by all the classes of the aristocracy, except the queen's family, as their patron and head. His power and predominance would suit every interest but the Woodvilles. These must either subside into subordinate and defeated nobles, or plunge themselves into direct competition with Gloucester. If they did not govern the king and kingdom, they would become insignificant : because, having risen wholly by the late king's favor, they would fall into obscurity without the new king's as zealous support ; but this prop would be lost, if others obtained the command of his official mind. Hence their interests and the duke of Gloucester's were wholly irreconcilable. He knew the weight they had thrown into the fatal scale against his brother Clarence, when Edward's mind was balancing on his execution. He could not be slow to foresee or dread his own destruction, if they obtained the triumph. Two dukes of Gloucester, both uncles of reigning sovereigns, had, under those sovereigns, been allowed to

BOOK IV. perish from the accusation, if not the direct authority, of the related crown.

REIGN OF EDW. V. But Hastings and Rivers had already become pitched against each other, in deadly hostility, during the life of Edward IV.; and from Hastings's differences with the queen's family, he had been, notwithstanding his high favor with the king, imprisoned in the Tower, and remained there for awhile, believing his life to be in jeopardy every hour. He could not suppose it would be less so from them now, if they obtained the ascendancy in the cabinet; nor could the Woodvilles imagine that the administration of Hastings would be more friendly to them.⁵⁰

Hence, if no historical information had reached us, of the issue of this state of personal interests and feelings, we should expect it to be, that all the other parties would combine to depress the queen's; and that this being accomplished, they would begin to differ among themselves, on the participation of the advantages of their victory.⁵¹ The aspiring would be inimical to those who were in possession. Buckingham and Hastings would be each indisposed to allow the superiority to the other; and as the king and queen-mother on the one hand, and Gloucester on the other, were the centers of two great opposing factions, they who found themselves least secure of

⁵⁰ Sir T. More says, ‘ Against Hastings the queen specially grudged, for the great favor the king bare him, and also for that she thought him secretly familiar with the king in wanton company. Her kindred also bare him sore, as well because the king had made him captain of Calais, which lord Rivers claimed of the king's former promise, as for divers other great gifts which he received, that they looked for.’ p. 157.

⁵¹ More intimates the rivalry between Buckingham and Hastings, as well as their temporary union against the Woodvilles. Both men of honor and of great power; the one by long succession from his ancestry, the other by his office and the king's favor. ‘ These two, not bearing to each other so much love, as hatred both unto the queen's party.’ p. 163.

Gloucester's favor would endeavor to add to their strength, by coalescing with every other party. Hence, as Buckingham and Gloucester cemented their political cordiality, Hastings and his friends would be tempted to ally with the queen and her assisting churchmen, and thereby to have a new claim to the young king's partiality. The final struggle would therefore be between Gloucester and Buckingham, on the one part, and Hastings, the queen, and Edward V. on the other; and the destruction of one side of the competitors, and possibly of both, would seem to be the ultimate result, which all former experience, and especially of the last two reigns, would teach us to anticipate. The melancholy catastrophe which actually occurred, corresponded with those probabilities.

From this preliminary survey it is obvious, that unless all the noble competitors for the power, rank, and fortune, which the command of the English government would give, had suddenly abandoned their ambitious pride, passions, and self-interest, a moral conflict must ensue, to determine in whom the regency, the administration, and the patronage of the crown of England should be vested. And this warfare did not depend on any secret intrigues or dark plottings of the duke of Gloucester; it was the open, palpable, and avowed state of things. Every one saw that these competitions existed; every one knew the resenting and aspiring feelings of the great leaders; and all the reflective must have expected a civil war. Indeed, one great cause of the ease with which the violences we have to narrate were committed, was, that they seemed to be preventive of those sanguinary battles, which had in the former reign produced so much destruction, and which, but for this more private

CHAP.
VI.
REIGN OF
EDW. V.

BOOK IV.
REIGN OF EDW. V.

way of suppressing each other, would certainly take place. A due impression of this truth will shew, that there is no necessity for supposing Gloucester to have been that vulgar and satanic anomaly, which party prejudice has represented him to be. He was, like most great men who stride forward to command their contemporaries, the creature and the mirror of his age and its circumstances. The very success which is so often ascribed to recondite art, is more frequently but an illustration of Oliver Cromwell's remark, "That no man often advances higher than he who knows not whither he is going." Men are rather pushed into the grand elevations they occupy, by the interests and efforts of others, or by the waves of succeeding circumstances, or by the opposition of their enemies, than raised to them by their own antecedent plots and cunning. These may somewhat assist, or awhile maintain, but rarely, if ever, exalt.

It will enlarge the picture of England's interior state, at the accession of Edward V. if we glance at the state of the knighthood of the country at that period.

1483.
The
knights of
England.

This had been the main prop of the military vigor and reputation of England. Every nobleman had been first a knight; every king coveted the honor, as his earliest distinction; and it was long the fashionable and certain avenue to wealth, honors, fame, beauty, and power.⁵² But near the death of Edward IV.

⁵² How highly knights were estimated in the reign of Henry VI. appears from the king's official letter, on the creation of a knight of the garter, 23 Henry VI.

'With great praises are they to be mentioned, and with singular glory to be extolled, who, with a fervent desire and unwearied mind, strive to apply their time and life to the welfare of the republic; who incur danger to themselves, that others may be tranquil; who thirst for an excelling fame, and an immortal name, above all worldly goods; and who deem

a remarkable change became visible in the minds and habits of the English knights and gentry. Whether so many had perished in the French campaigns, and in the civil wars at home, that the population did not provide a supply as rapid as the loss; or whether the calamities of a fighting life, or the introduction of cannon in battle, or Edward's luxurious habits, had created a distaste for the chivalric pursuits; or whether all these causes combined to change the public humor; it is manifest, that the warlike amusements of knighthood were, at this period, falling into disuse. The ancient books of chivalry were laid aside; and gentlemen, instead of courting the knightly honor, avoided its imposition. This feeling began in the reign of Henry VI. after the reverses of the French wars. We find persons, in 1439, petitioning parliament to be discharged from the legal obligation of assuming this once coveted dignity, on their paying fines to the king instead.⁵³ Hence, Richard was obliged to issue an order, as protector, in the name of Edward V., to command those who had the requisite forty pounds a-year to receive the dignity. Such compulsions had occurred before; but it is in the reign of Richard III.⁵⁴

CHAP.
VI.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

themselves happy, if they perceive that the common good can be assisted by their labor and fidelity. O most happy race of men! without whom cities, walls, kingdoms, lordships, the princes of the world, nay even the world itself, could not enjoy safety! O most illustrious and just men! by whose consecrated disposition all the virtues flourish, the bad are restrained, and the perverse kept down.' Rot. Turris Lond. ap. Anst. Reg. Gart. v. 1. p. 131.

⁵³ Roll Parl. p. 27. The king of Prussia says truly, 'In these gross ages, the address of the body was estimated as it was in the time of Homer. Our times, more enlightened, grant their esteem only to the talents of the mind; and to those virtues, which, raising man above his condition, cause him to trample his passions under his feet, and make him benevolent, generous and sympathizing.' Hist. Brand. 1. p. 25.

⁵⁴ Caxton addressed his book 'Of the Ordre of Chyvalry, or Knyght-hode, translated out of Frenche,' to, 'my redoubted lord king Richard.'

He

BOOK
IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

that Caxton complains, that the exercises of chivalry were not used as before;⁵⁵ and that the knights of his day, instead of these employments, wasted their time at baths and dice, sleeping and taking their ease.⁵⁶ He exhorts them to read the old romances, where they would see manhood, courtesy, and gentilness.⁵⁷ He intimates, that few of them were ready at a point, to display a knight's accomplishments;⁵⁸ and calls upon Richard, twice or thrice a year to celebrate jousts of peace, to make knights provide themselves as they ought, and to have tournaments for prizes, that gentlemen might court fame by chivalry, and be always ready to serve their prince, when called on.⁵⁹ The same happy decline of the battle spirit seems to have also pervaded the yeomanry of the country; for Richard found it necessary to issue mandates to his bailiffs, to prohibit men from neglecting the lawful game of shooting with

He says, ‘which book is not requisite to every man to have, but to noble gentlemen, that, by their virtue, intend to come, and entre into the noble ordre of Chivalry.’ Oldys. Brit. Lib. p. 191.

⁵⁵ ‘Forgotten, and the exercises of chivalry not used, honored, nor exercised, as it bath been in ancient time, at which time the noble acts of the knights of England that used chivalry, were renowned through the universal world.’ Ib.

⁵⁶ ‘O ye knights of England, where is the custom and usage of noble chivalry?—What do ye now, but go to the baynes, and play at dyse? Alas! what do ye, but sleep and take ease, and are all disordered fro chivalry.’ Ib. 192.

⁵⁷ ‘Leve this; leve it, and rede the noble volumes of s^t Graal, of Lancelot, of Trystram, of Galao, of Perseforest, of Perceval, of Gawayn, and many mo. There shall ye see manhode, curtoise, and gentylness.’ Ib.

⁵⁸ ‘I would demand a question. How many knights been there now in England that have the use and exercise of a knight; ready at a point to have all thing that longeth to a knight; an horse that is according, and broken after its kind; his armurers and harness mete and fytting, and so forth?’ Ib. 193.

⁵⁹ ‘I would it pleased our sovereigne lord, that twice or thrice in a year, or at least once, he would do cry justs of peace, to the end that every knight should have horse and harness, and also the use and craft of a knight; and also to tourneye, one against one, or two against two, and the best to have a prize, a diamond or jewel.’ Ib. It is clear, from these passages, that the ancient knight was now going out of fashion.

CHAP.
VI.REIGN OF
EDW. IV.

arrows.⁶⁰ This seems to have been a point of even national importance ; for Comines remarks, that the chief strength of an army, in the day of battle, consisted in the archers ; and gives the English the merit of being then the best archers in the world.⁶¹ Till guns came into full use, they were, in fact, the artillery of an army ; the agents that destroy without personal contact. It was, perhaps, fortunate for our national happiness and improvements, that while the nobility were most factious, the people were becoming less warlike.

The state of the public mind towards the church, at this time, and the ecclesiastical feeling on this subject, ought not to be omitted, when we are contemplating the various causes of agitation which were disturbing England, when Richard took the helm of government, and was permitted or excited to seize the crown.

A discourse, prepared to be delivered at the convocation of the clergy, ten days after the death of Edward IV. and which still exists in manuscript, will give us sufficient information on this important point.⁶²

⁶⁰ This was issued 7 May 1484. It forbade them to use carding, dising, bowling, playing at the tennis, quoiting, pikking, and other unlawful and inhibited sports. Harl. MSS. p. 215. But this injunction implies that men were exchanging the violent exercises of war for those amusements which have occupied the English gentry and rustics till our own times. This change of taste, or diminished use of shooting, was then ascribed to the advanced price of bows and bowstaves ; and acts were passed forbidding long bows to be sold for more than 3*s.* 4*d.* each, and bowstaves for more than 40*s.*, or at most 46*s.* 8*d.* the hundred. Stat. Realm, 2. p. 472, 494.

⁶¹ Comines, 1. p. 31. One cause of the decline of knighthood may have been, that the sovereigns found it to be important to their own safety to discountenance it in peace. Knights made their nobility too formidable. Hence, in Nov. 1413, the king issued orders, forbidding knights or squires to obey the summons of any lord. Monstrel. 3. p. 260.

⁶² It has not yet appeared in print. It is in the British Museum, MS. Cleop. E 3. It does not appear to have been actually spoken, as the convocation is not stated to have met as intended.

State of
the church.A speech
for open-
ing the
convoca-
tion.

BOOK
IV.REIGN OF
EDW. V.

The orator or preacher alludes strongly to the necessity of lessening their pecuniary avidity :—

“ Let us, after the example of the gospel, make ourselves good shepherds, not mercenary ones; that we may know our sheep, and they may know us. It is time; it is indeed time, excellent fathers! to listen to the precept of the apostle, that we should be instant in season and out of season.”

“ But many will say, that all these things are most accurately fulfilled; and that such elaborate addresses ought not to be made in public. Human faults should not be chided with such acrimony as they are in this kingdom.”

After praying for “ our new prince, of the best disposition and the sweetest hope; our dread king Edward v. the lady queen Elizabeth, his mother; all the royal offspring; the princes of the king; his nobles and people;” he directs his address to lament the hostility, which, as he could not disguise, was pressing against the church: “ There are two kinds of christians, clergy and laity; but the laymen now harass the clergy. These are two armies unequal in worldly power; and one will destroy the other, unless the kindness and harmony of the fellow-soldiers resist prudently what opposes.” He then regrets, “ that the clerical body should be divided by discords within itself; and states, that the laity wished to suppress the power and liberty of the church. That the negligences, ignorances, cupidity, and avarice of the prelates, were every where inculcated; that their judgments, processes, sentences and decrees were held in contempt; and that the orders of their councils were irreverently disputed before the laity.”

Attacks on
the clergy
in 1483.

“ These things,” he says, “ provoke the laity of

CHAP.
VI.REIGN OF
EDW. V.

our time, to attempt such unbridled enormities against the church. Fearing no censure, they even indict clergymen for fictitious crimes; drag them to examinations; throw them into squalid prisons, to make them empty their barns, while some are even fixed in pillories, or fastened to the gibbet." He continues:

" There are scarcely ten in any diocese, who do not yearly suffer either in their person or their purse. Hence parsons do not reside on their benefices; yet this cause not being adverted to, they are publicly inveighed against for their absence; and all the regard and devotion of the faithful to the priests have become chilled; and tithes, oblations, and other benefits to the churches, fall to nothing. No censure is omitted, which can make priests and their actions displeasing and hateful to the people. Consummate orators apply themselves to these topics only to please the public; their vanity blinds them to the future; and they will not see the venom which is gathering in the tail."

" It is easy," he adds, " for clergymen, who are clothed in soft raiment, in this city and other large towns, and who, from the greatness of their literature, have the first seats at the banquets of the great, and the first greetings in the market-place, and who know nothing of the persecutions of the country priests, to enlarge invectively against these for non-residence. Could they experience such evils themselves, they would alter their opinions."

He then exclaims, " Thou, city priest! art thou ignorant how greatly thy good fortune differs from thy rustic brother's? You take only ready money, of which neither violence nor craft can deprive you!"

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

But where can he place his safety, his sheep, oxen, lambs, wool, calves, horses, grass, and corn?—For if the power and equity of a good king could restrain the audacity of wicked force; yet there are so many local pretensions of law, so many loopholes; such intricacies made; so many presentations before twelve men, and other contrivances, that scarcely any ecclesiastic dares to say, that what he possesses, will be his own."

Having painted these evils, he very emphatically calls upon the convocation to end all their differences: "Let there be no more schisms among us. Let us not dispute either upon law or reason. If any one has a measure to propose of reform, in the clerical state, or jurisdiction, let him come here and propose it to this assembly. Here we sit remote from laymen. No wicked Ham can here act indecently to his father, nor have seat or voice among us."

"So I wish that all preachers, who would suggest any thing great to prelates or ecclesiastical persons, for their emendation, would chuse such a place apart, to announce the crimes of their pastors, where the horned cattle will not be present with us. Where they who particularly exult, and erect their horns to strike the pastors of their churches, and to disperse their flocks, may *not learn from us* what is objectionable in us."

"We have now rolled the stone, from which—from which, I say, the people laugh at us, and make us their songs all the day long."

He again exhorts the different orders of the church to love each other as brethren. He reminds them, that some of the middle ranks of the people, (the

CHAP.
VI.REIGN OF
EDW. V.The vio-
lent spirit
of the
times.

third in order,) are not slothful spectators of such an odious contest, and attend to it only to consider and look forward to its inevitable result.⁶⁵

To this survey of the leading interests and feelings of the various classes of the state, let us add the recollection of the spirit of individual violence, which then generally raged in society, both at home and abroad. One of its worst features, was an indifference to the shedding of human blood, which to us is inconceivable, especially in the upper ranks. A duke of Burgundy easily found gentlemen to assassinate the duke of Orleans;⁶⁶ and the Dauphin, with every previous treachery, had Burgundy destroyed in his presence.⁶⁷ Friars of repute even preached, to justify such deeds.⁶⁸

It was not only in a civil war, that after defeating 50,000 people of Liege, with 3200 men, their feudal lord purposely continued the slaughter, till 28,000 had perished;⁶⁹ but when in regular battle the admiral of Bretagne had beaten the English fleet, and taken 2000 prisoners, the greater part of these were thrown over board and drowned.⁷⁰ Where there was no hope of ransom, there was little mercy. Garrisons were repeatedly put to the sword, after being taken by storm, by both the English and French, in France;⁷¹ and the count Namur seized and beheaded

⁶⁵ MSS. Cleop. E 3, pp. 106-116.

⁶⁶ See vol. 2. of this History, p. 392.

⁶⁷ See vol. 2. of this History, p. 479.

⁶⁸ Monst. v. 1. p. 220.

⁶⁹ When the duke was asked, after the defeat, if they should cease from slaying the Liegeois, he replied, ‘Let them all die together, for I will not that any prisoner be made, nor that any be ransomed.’ 2 Monst. 36.

⁷⁰ This was in 1403. Monst. v. 1. p. 90.

⁷¹ Thus in 1423, when the duke of Bedford, in the month after his marriage, took Pont sur Seine, he put all the French there to the sword. Monst. 6. p. 35; and see the cruelties on the capture of Soissons, v. 4. p. 31; and so, when Luxembourg retook Hamme, ‘he cruelly put to

BOOK IV. his illegitimate brother, because he had consented to his sister's marriage with a great lord, whom he disliked.⁷⁰ Of the unsparing cruelty with which the English nobility and gentry put each other to death after capture, in their civil contests, we have before given frequent instances.⁷¹ To behead or kill a personal or political enemy, the moment they had him in their power, seems to have been a matter of course. If two gentlemen met, who had any dislike towards each other, it did not, as now, cause an honorable discussion or a single duel, on equal terms, but an immediate attack, followed by murder.⁷² The most deliberate and daring homicides were committed without remorse, and even in the face of the gazing public.

The change of sentiment in English society, on this point, is as remarkable as it is beneficial. The murderer's grudge, which in the fifteenth century was often a cherished inmate in the nobleman's breast, is now consigned to be the opprobrium of the lowest and most worthless of mankind. No others, in our happy country, now exhibit it. A few examples will be given, in the notes, of the personal violences and

death the greater part of his enemies.' v. 6. p. 65. Such things are often mentioned.

⁷⁰ Monst. 1. p. 160.

⁷¹ See this volume, in several places.

⁷² Sir Henry Stafford, eldest son of the duke of Buckingham, had some old debate with sir Robert Harcourt, about taking a distress for rents. By chance at Coventry, Stafford, with his son Richard, was going to his inn, Richard being a little behind. Harcourt came near. He struck Richard violently on his head with his sword, who rushed on him with his dagger, but stumbling, one of Harcourt's men stabbed him in the back with a knife. His father, hearing a noise, rode up with his followers; but as he was dismounting, some one struck him on the head with an edge tool, and he fell down dead by his son. His servants pursued Harcourt's, and killed two of his party, and several were wounded. Both parties were indicted, but nothing seems to have followed. Fenn's Letters, 1. p. 15.

atrocities which repeatedly occurred, during the fifteenth century, in England.⁷³

⁷³ The following instances of illegal violences done by persons of the upper ranks of society, between 1410 and 1480, will shew their general conduct, whenever their passions or their interests were concerned:

An abbot, having been three years in possession of his abbey, was ousted forcibly by another, who had obtained the pope's grant of it over his head. The dispossessed abbot, with his brother and 40 friends, armed from head to foot, attacked the other; shot at him several barbed arrows to kill him, wounded him and three of his followers, and took away his jewels, plate and property. Rolls Parl. 4. p. 28.

The prior and canons of Bernewell, claiming the tenants of Chesterton as their bond ceorles, who denied their right of slavery, six priests and canons, at the instigation of another priest, laid in wait for one of the resisting tenants, on the king's highway, beat and wounded him almost to death, took away his books and bills, and kept him in prison seven years; the marks of his wounds still remaining when he petitioned Parliament for relief. Ib. p. 61.

It was stated to Parliament, that a great number of scholars and clerks of Oxford, armed and arrayed for war, often dispossessed and ousted many persons of the contiguous counties of Oxford, Berks and Buckingham, of their lands and tenements, so that their owners could not live on them. Rolls Parl. 131.

Another petition complained, that in Herefordshire, even before the civil wars, besides divers extortions, oppressions and murders, various persons were lawlessly deprived of their lands and goods, and their women and children carried off, and kept in dungeons, till they had ransomed themselves.

Sir John Talbot, his brother sir William, and 49 other persons, are named as pursuing these practices. Ib. 254.

In Cambridge, its county, and in Essex, several persons sent orders to many people, commanding them to put great sums of money in certain places, or their houses should be burnt. Many mansions were robbed and destroyed accordingly. The Irish, Welsh and Scotch scholars at the University, are declared to be the authors of these atrocities. Ib. 358.

In 1430, the House of Commons called the attention of the government to the murders, rapes, robberies and burnings, that pervaded the counties of Salop, York, Nottingham, Derby and Sussex. Ib. p. 421.

A lady of quality's house was attacked by a gentleman, with an armed party, who forced an entrance at five in the morning, carried her away from her bed, in her linen and kirtle only; took her to a church, and insisted on the priest marrying her. She refused; he menaced. The priest read the ceremony, in spite of her resistance; and she was taken away to the wild and desolate part of Wales. Ib. 497-8.

In 1439, another lady of distinction complained of her late husband's great friend, who had undertaken to conduct her to her sick mother. On the way, an armed ambush, he had secretly provided, started into the road, smote her on the arm, and beat down her servant. Her friend pretended to relieve her, but it was only to carry her to the marches of Wales, where he kept her without any meat or drink, but a little whey, till she was nearly dead, that she might consent to marry him. On her refusal, she was put into a dungeon at Glamorgan, and threatened to be

BOOK
IV.
REIGN OF
EDW. V.

Having thus sketched the spirit and state of society, the leading persons, and the counteracting currents of interests and passions, amid which Richard was,

transported to the Snowdon mountains. Tho she was pregnant, she was forced to a church; she persisted in her refusal; and, notwithstanding her outcries, was taken off, and violated. Rolls Parl. 5. p. 15.

In 1472, as the deputy of the duchy of Cornwall was sitting on the bench, holding its legal court, a gentleman, who had malice against him for the office, suddenly, with 14 armed men, attacked and grievously wounded him and his servants; tore the official rolls, and robbed and imprisoned him without relief, that he might bleed to death, till they had compelled him to give the release and pecuniary bonds which they desired. After they had let him go, the same person procured others to waylay him at a fair; killed him, clove his head into four pieces, and cut off one of his legs and arms and head, and stripped his body of all his money. Ib. 6. p. 35-7.

In the same year, as another person was travelling in Yorkshire, three brothers, for some grudge, suddenly thrust at him with a spear; and when he had fallen from his horse, with their swords they smote off both his hands and one of his arms, and hamstrung his legs; and left him bleeding and dying, taking away his armor. They then endeavored to get into the duke of Gloucester's service, to have his protection against all legal consequences. Ib. p. 38.

About the same time, as sir John Ashton, with his lady and family and friends, were at his manor house, she then in childbed, a squire, at the head of 200 persons in arms, and sounding their horns and trumpets, at two in the morning attacked his fortified house; broke down the walls, and, with fire that they had brought with them in a salette, set fire to the gates. To save his wife's life, and stop the outrages, he was compelled to come forth, and submit to them. They carried him to Pomfret castle, and extorted from him a bond of 1000*l.* Ib. 51.

As a Cornish gentleman, with his wife and family, were going on a pilgrimage, they were attacked by ten others with bows and arrows, swords and bills, acting under the orders of a neighboring gentleman. They escaped much wounded, but were afterwards again assailed by them, when reinforced by 30 others, a part of whom afterwards assaulted and plundered his mansion. Ib. 54.

In 1477, a gentleman headed 24 persons, by the command of the duke of Clarence, broke into a lady's house, and carried her off violently to Bath; took all her jewels and money; separated her from all her servants, and imprisoned her; and then caused her to be indicted on an absurd charge of contriving the death of the duchess. Ib. 173.

Even official men used their power to give effect to their rapacity. The inhabitants of the Isle of Wight complained to Parliament, that John Newport, the steward of the isle, tho he had but ten marcs a year from his office, and had no other livelihood, yet kept an household and a countenance like a lord, with as rich wines as might be: naming himself Newport the gallant, or Newport the rich. 'To maintain this style, he so acted, "the country daily cursed him, that ever he came there." Ib. 5. p. 205.

by his brother's unexpected death, suddenly called CHAP.
VI. upon to act, we proceed to narrate the events that ensued; which, from the preceding considerations, REIGN OF
EDW. V. may be expected to be of an odious and direful kind; not in him alone, but in all who were then struggling for ascendancy or advantage.

C H A P. VII.

First Acts and Divisions of the Royal Council—King brought to London—Arrest of Lord Rivers—Gloucester made Regent—Further Party Contests—Death of Hastings.

BOOK IV.
1483. THE funeral of Edward was attended by the lords of all the parties who were then in London; but Buckingham was not among the number.¹ It is probable, that none of those who were in power at that time, wished to introduce him into it.

As Gloucester was in the marches bordering on Scotland, at Edward's death, and it had occurred so unexpectedly, the first measures of the government must have been without his participation; and therefore shew the conflicts that would have occurred, independently of his interference. The royal council appointed the 4th May for the new coronation, and urged the young king to come up immediately to London:² so far they were unanimous. Every one wished him to succeed to all his father's majesty.³

¹ His body was borne by sir John Cheyney, master of horse, sir Thomas Tyrrell, and others. Lord Howard bore his banneret, and these peers followed:

Earl Lincoln,	Lord Dacre, queen's chamberlain,
Marquis Dorset,	Dudley,
Earl Huntingdon,	Burgenny,
Viscount Berkeley,	Audley,
Lord Stanley, high steward,	Lyle,
Hastings, king's chamberlain,	Cobham,
	Wellys.

Harl. MSS. 6. 111.

By the MSS. Vit. l. 17, in the Cotton library, it appears, that Edward's mother, the duchess of York, in 1480 became a Benedictine nun. p. 250.

² Hist. Croyl. 564.

³ Ib.

C H A P.
VII.REIGN OF
EDW. V.

But while so young, some sort of regency was thought necessary, or rather was desired by those who coveted power ; and the first disturbing question was, to whom should this be intrusted. A division arose on this important subject. That it was aspired to, if not claimed by the queen's family, is evident, by the more prudent part of the council determining that it should not be held by the king's maternal uncles or brothers.⁴ But the decision of their votes could but produce a temporary exclusion ; it still remained to be afterwards contested, as a matter of influence or power. Hence the next and most vital question arose, (and both occurred in Gloucester's absence, and without his privity at that time,) with what degree of military force should the king come up from Ludlow to London. They who had decided, that the Woodvilles or Greys should not be the regents, perceived that this exclusion could not be effectuated, unless the number of the royal forces from Wales should be sufficiently restricted ;⁵ as resolutions in council would be useless against a superior martial force. Hastings thought, that if they came in strength, they would avenge their former resentments on him, as a long-standing ill-will had prevailed between him and this party.⁶ He therefore declared, that unless the king and Rivers advanced to the metropolis, with such a retinue as could cause no alarm, he would retire to his government at Calais,⁷ and there abide the issue. These feelings avowed a determination to appeal to the sword, rather than to be in the power of his political rivals. The queen's friends had the same motives to dread and distrust their antagonists. It

⁴ We learn this from Croyland, p. 564. He says, the 'prudentiores' of the council so decided it.

⁵ Croyl. 564.

⁶ Ib. 565.

⁷ Ib.

BOOK
IV.
REIGN OF
EDW. V.

was visibly a dangerous game of political chess, of which life and dignity were the stake. Both parties had reason to expect mortal attacks from each other, on account of preceding injuries, as well as from present competition: neither could give confidence, or expect favor; and all that could be then done was to watch each other with balancing forces, till one of them could obtain the chances of a deciding superiority.

The queen suspended, rather than prevented, the impending battle, by proposing, that her brother's forces should be limited to 2000 men. Hastings assented to this, because he thought that his own powers, with those of Gloucester and Buckingham, whom he now found it necessary to act with, would be fully equal to those.⁸ The queen communicated the agreement to Rivers.

Gloucester was, during these transactions, in the north; and his conduct, on hearing of his brother's death, was frank, decided, honorable and loyal. He wrote to the queen kind and consoling letters, assuring her of his fidelity and duty to the king; and reaching York, he celebrated there a funeral service for Edward, with affectionate pomp; and caused all the nobility of those parts to swear fealty to the king; and, as an example, he took the oath of allegiance himself first.⁹ No behaviour could avow more sincerity and good meaning than this early loyalty. It

⁸ Croyl. 565. I have taken these facts from this valuable author, who was a near spectator of these events, and had been employed by Edward IV. as one of his ambassadors, in preference to More, who could only have his account from the information of Richard's enemies.

⁹ Croyl. 565. After the funeral at York, Richard received at night, a private messenger from Buckingham, who came to assure him, that his master would act with him, and could command 'a thousand good fellows if need were.' The same messenger met Richard at Nottingham, before he reached Northampton. More, 252.

was contrary to all common policy to have fettered himself, and the nobility of the north, with the obligations of an oath to Edward, if he had then meant to supplant him. Such an action was only creating the formidable obstacles of conscience and honor against himself, without any impulsive necessity.

CHAP.
VII.REIGN OF
EDW. V.

Artifice would have appointed the day of fealty after the coronation, instead of volunteering it beforehand. The most honorable intentions could not, at least, have acted more uprightly. It is necessary to attend to all these circumstances, because the historical probability seems to be, that Gloucester was gradually led to all that he did by the events and necessities that successively occurred, instead of having started, from the beginning, an atrocious and preternatural villain, of the foulest treachery, and the darkest deceit; a witch-born Caliban, rather than a man. The son of a high-minded father; brother of a gallant and generous king; head of a brave, chivalrous and spirited, tho haughty, violent, and irascible nobility, and himself but entering the vestibule of manhood, was not likely to have been such a revolting monster.

Edward v. remained at Ludlow till the 23d of April, and there celebrated St. George's day, with those splendid entertainments, which usually distinguished the anniversary of the popular champion of England. On the 24th, he set off for London,¹⁰ with his uncles, lord Rivers and lord Richard Grey, sir Thomas Vaughan, and a retinue not exceeding the appointed number.

Having seen what was done by the late king's cabinet council, at London, during Gloucester's

¹⁰ Ross, Hist. Reg. p. 212.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

absence, it is important to observe what the queen's friends did before he met them, and therefore, of their own free will and deliberate choice; recollecting that the minds of all parties being in a state of the most jealous suspicion, and each being in the greatest personal danger from the other, nothing but the most straight-forward, unsuspicious, and upright actions ought to have been done, till time and mutual intercourse had, if it were possible, allayed each others fears, and laid some foundation for harmonious co-operation.

The marquis Dorset took the king's treasure out of the Tower, of which he was governor, and with part of it, equipped a naval fleet.¹¹ This was, in fact, securing it for the queen's party; and providing a force at his own command on the sea, which the compact with the queen had prevented on land. Falconbridge's attack on London, in the preceding reign, proved what a formidable attack might be made with an hostile navy. To have taken possession of such an engine of power as the treasure of the crown, before the regent was appointed, was to have the most ready and formidable means of endangering and counteracting both him and his government.

Rivers accompanied the king to Northampton, to meet Gloucester, who set off from York for the same place. The most natural wish of the duke's mind, in its most honorable purposes, and most reasonable expectations, was to pay his homage and congratulation to his royal nephew, as soon as possible; and

¹¹ More owns this, tho he says it was 'done for good purposes, and necessary, by the whole council at London,' p. 167. The ecclesiastical lords may have turned the majority of the council to sanction this measure; but it is impossible that Hastings could have assented to it, and there was no foreign dangers to make it of immediate urgency.

the candid conduct of Rivers obviously would have been, to have made the meeting as early, as frank, and as confiding as he could, if he was himself disposed to establish cordiality, or to remove any mistrust between himself and Gloucester, or between Gloucester and the king. But instead of thus acting, and as if to prevent Gloucester from any interview with his nephew, Rivers, as soon as he arrived at Northampton, sent the king thirteen miles in advance to Stoney Stratford, while he remained behind to receive the dukes of Gloucester and Buckingham ; so that, when they came to Northampton, they found the king not there.¹² That it was a part of Rivers's plan, that the king should hasten to London, without seeing Gloucester, seems evident, from the duke finding his sovereign early the next day at Stratford, ready to leap on horseback, and depart forward,¹³ without waiting for any one. If Rivers and the Greys had projected to keep the king exclusively in their hands, they could not have taken a more direct course to this object. No step could be more expressive, at least, of such an intention ; and if it were adopted from mere caution, it was, at least, the measure most likely to alarm and dissatisfy Gloucester's mind, and to fill it with jealousy, and anger, and apprehension.

Buckingham reached Northampton with 300 men, about the same time that Gloucester arrived there, with 600 gentlemen of the north, and both were introduced to Rivers. The immediate result was, a cordial greeting, and protracted friendly banquet, between the three noblemen.¹⁴ They separated for

¹² This is More's account : 'The King was in his way to London, gone from Northampton, WHEN these dukes came thither. Where remained behind the lord Rivers, intending on the morrow to follow.' p. 165.

¹³ More, 167.

¹⁴ Ib. 252 and 165. Croyl. 565.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

the night, with great courtesy ; but while Rivers retired to his repose, happy, perhaps, that he had so managed as to give the king the start to London, the two dukes, “ with a few of their most privy friends, set them down in council, wherein they spent a great part of the night.”¹⁵

The discussions of this consultation are not mentioned, but we can perceive for ourselves, what subjects they had to consider. The singularity of the king’s being sent on before, as if to avoid them ; the fact, of the queen’s relations having pretended to the regency ; her son Dorset, having taken possession of the king’s treasure ; the desire of this party, that their friends should come up from Wales, with an army of force, which only Hastings’s resolution had prevented ; and the certainty that when the king was in London, surrounded by his mother’s friends, and exercising the royal power, it would be directed against them, by their political antagonists, from his predilections, and the queen’s and her family influence ;—These were topics that demanded the most anxious consideration, as they involved the safety and fortune of all who were not of the Woodville party. It was not a dark, private plotting, between Gloucester and Buckingham only ; More says, that they sat down in council, with a few of their most privy friends. It was, therefore, a serious discussion of their party, on the measures proper to be taken, in a critical and perilous conjuncture. It was the same debate, in this council, which had been agitated in the cabinet council at London ; Whether the queen’s family should exclude, or be excluded from the regency and government—and whether

¹⁵ More, 165. Croyl. 565.

this should be determined by an appeal to open war, or by their using the opportunity that lay before them ? The battle would have the disadvantage, that the king's feelings being with the Woodvilles, all who opposed them must be rebels, and be attainted of treason, if they failed in arms.

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

The result of the deliberation was, that Rivers, Grey, and the king's friends, should be forcibly arrested ; and the king be taken immediately out of their hands. Nothing can be said in justification of such conduct. It was injustice, violence, and legal, tho' not intentional, treason. But it was a resort to crime, to prevent the exertion of similar crime, apprehended to be in contemplation against themselves. It was violence anticipating violence. The action was abominable ; but there seems no reason to doubt, that their apprehensions were well founded. It is in a crisis like this, that true virtue displays itself. Alarm often hurries men of mere worldly honor, sometimes, indeed, infirm rectitude itself, into vice : but genuine probity allows no circumstances of danger, or profit, ever to reduce it to think, that the end can sanctify the means ; or that what is really criminal can cease to be so, because it happens to become expedient. The nobility of England were then too ambitious to be upright ; and no one cared how they secured the glittering objects for which they were contending. The folly, as well as the iniquity of such conduct, is written in characters of blood and misery, in the history of England, from the elevation of Suffolk to the accession of Henry the Seventh.

At dawn, the dukes broke up their council, and privately ordering their followers to harness them-

BOOK IV. selves for their journey, planted some on the road to Stoney Stratford, to prevent any one from going thither without their permission, and had the keys of the inn, where they and Rivers lodged, placed before them. He rose to depart; but finding himself obstructed, went boldly to the dukes, and inquired the cause of the impediment. They accused him of setting a distance between the king and them, and of meditating to bring them to confusion; but assured him, that he should not have the power.¹⁶ He attempted to excuse himself; but as he had, in fact, separated the king from them, no apologies availed. He was put into custody, and they advanced to Stoney Stratford.¹⁷

They found the king and his retinue on the point of departing for London; the allegation is, because Stratford was too small for both companies. This was no doubt the ostensible reason; which may have been true at Stratford, tho it could not have been so at Northampton, where parliaments had been frequently held. As soon as they came into the king's presence, they alighted down, with all their friends; and Buckingham, ordering his gentlemen and yeomanry to go before and take their places; they approached the king in a goodly array, and saluted him on their knees, with uncovered heads, in a very humble manner.¹⁸ There is no occasion to ascribe this to their hypocrisy. It was their duty, according to the custom of the age; and as their first intentions seem not to have reached beyond securing the regency and the administration, it was the natural expression of their feelings, as well-educated men.

¹⁶ More, 166.

¹⁷ Ib. 167. Croyl. 565.

¹⁸ Ib. 167.

The king received them kindly ; but in a short time, in his presence, they accused lord Richard Grey of conspiring with Dorset and Rivers, to rule the king and the realm ; to set variance among its estates, and to subdue and destroy the noble blood of the nation ;¹⁹ and they adduced the seizure of the royal treasure, by the marquis, as evidence of this design. Edward disavowed any knowlege of what Dorset had done ; and strongly expressing his belief of the innocence of at least Rivers and Grey ; Buckingham replied, that they had kept his good grace in ignorance of their plottings.²⁰ Gloucester assured him, that he was acting in his own defence, as those persons were confederating against his honor and life.²¹ Grey and Vaughan were instantly arrested ; all went back to Northampton, where the dukes held again another council on their most expedient conduct.²² These events happened on Wednesday, the last day of April.²³

CHAP.
VII.REIGN OF
EDW. V.

They discharged from the king his former attendants, and placed their own friends about him. He wept at this, but could not prevent it. At dinner, Gloucester sent from his own table a dish to lord Rivers, praying him to be of good cheer, as all should end well. The earl returned his thanks for the courtesy, but desired it might be carried to his nephew lord Richard, to whom adversity was a novelty. To this he added, that he himself had been inured to it, and therefore could bear it better.²⁴ The arrested

¹⁹ More, 167.²⁰ Ib. 168.²¹ Croyl. 565. Rous, who lived at the time, says, they were conspired against, because they had contrived the duke's death, p. 213. So that this was the belief at the time.²² More, 168.²³ Croyl. Ib.²⁴ Ib. Rivers mentioned the same feeling six years before, in the introduction to his ' Dictes,' when he said of himself, ' Every human crea-

BOOK IV.
REIGN OF EDW. V.

noblemen were then sent to different castles in Yorkshire. There is no evidence, that at this period, Gloucester intended to destroy them, whatever might be the wishes of Hastings. The duke was coming to town to obtain the regency, and to judge for himself of the state of the different parties, and of the line of conduct he should pursue. He had, as yet, no interest to do more than to depress the queen's party till he was settled as regent. By what coalitions he should most securely possess and exercise his dignity, and secure the king's future favor, he had yet to ascertain. It was not become quite visible, whether Hastings or the Woodvilles would act most submissingly or most cordially with him.

But thus far it is clear, that Rivers had thrown himself into the lion's mouth, and provoked its grasp by his own refining policy. The very act of sending the king forward to London, by which he thought to put him out of Gloucester's reach or influence, occasioned both himself and his nephew to fall into Richard's power; for by dividing, in this manner, the forces he had brought with him, he enabled Gloucester, by his superior numbers, to disarm him at Northampton, and in the same manner to overpower his friends at Stratford. If he had kept the king with him at Northampton, this could not have been attempted, as the followers of both the dukes amounted but to 900 men. But the separation gave his antagonists both the temptation and the opportunity to do what they effected. Gloucester ordered all those who had accompanied the king from Ludlow,

ture is subject to the storms of fortune, and perplexed with worldly adversity, of which he had largely had his part; but having been relieved by the goodness of God, he was exhorted to dispose his recovered life to his service.' Oldys, Brit. Lib. 65.

to withdraw from the town, and not to come near the places where he resided, on pain of death.²⁵

A little before midnight, the news of these transactions arrived in London. The queen, terrified, immediately left her palace with her youngest son and daughters, and lodged herself in the sanctuary of the abbot's residence.²⁶ Hastings, who approved of what had been done at Northampton, sent the communication of it to the chancellor archbishop, then in bed, with an assurance, that there was no cause for any apprehension, but that all would be well.²⁷ But the prelate went immediately with his household, "every man weaponed," to the queen. He found all her servants busy in taking into the sanctuary her coffers and goods, but herself sitting alone on the rushes, all desolate and dismayed. He strove to comfort her by the chamberlain's message ; but she told him, that Hastings was one of those who was laboring to destroy both her and her blood. He promised her, that if they crowned any other than her eldest son, he and his friends would, the next day, make her youngest, king, and delivered into her hands the great seal for the benefit of her son.²⁸

The next day all was commotion, curiosity, murmurs, discussion, and conjecture, in the metropolis. The active and zealous immediately took their different sides—all armed themselves ; some went to the queen, and others to Hastings,²⁹ and a deadly conflict appeared approaching. The peers of parliament assembled : the chancellor, anticipating that

²⁵ Croyl. His preceptor Alcock, bishop of Worcester, was removed with the rest. Rous, 213.

²⁶ Croyl, 565. More, 169.

²⁷ The prelate's foreseeing reply to him was, 'Be it as well as it will, it will never be so well, as we have seen it.' More, 169.

²⁸ More, 170.

²⁹ Ib. Croyl, 566.

BOOK IV. his hastiness would be censured, sent to her for the seals back again; and Hastings assured the lords, that Gloucester was faithful to the king; and that the arrested persons had been secured, not for his majesty's jeopardy, but for their own plots against their antagonists, and would be detained only till they could be fairly examined and judged.³⁰ He caused it to be publicly dispersed, that the dukes were bringing up the king, expressly for his coronation: and that the Woodville party had been contriving the destruction of the noble blood of the kingdom, that they alone might govern the king at their pleasure.³¹ It is too probable that these representations either were true, or would have been soon made so. It was the unhappy state of the case, that one party was certain of so acting towards the other. The only difference was, that Rivers had given to his competitors the opportunity of being the first agents; and after an anxious deliberation, they had promptly seized and effectually used it. It is manifest, that thus far Gloucester had done nothing but what Buckingham, Hastings, and their friends, wished, approved, and thought necessary.

The metropolis was soon quieted, by the tidings of the king's approach to London. The lord mayor, sheriffs and aldermen, in their scarlet gowns, and 500 citizens on horseback, in velvet, met the king at Hornsey, and accompanied him into the city, to the bishop's palace at St. Paul's, on the 4th of May. Gloucester was seen by all, behaving to him with

³⁰ More, 171, 2.

³¹ Ib. 172. Carts of armor were taken to London by the duke's servants, as evidence of the preparations that had been making by Rivers and his friends, to effectuate what they were charged with. 173.

that demeanor of reverential humility,²² with uncovered head and humble bows, with which the sovereign was then attended. Soon afterwards, all the peers took the oath of fealty to Edward.

But the arrival of the king in the metropolis set all the feelings of ambition into full activity. He was found to be an interesting prince, of pleasing manners, and of cultivated and advancing mind.²³ He was in his 14th year; and the first considerations that occurred were, as to the necessity of a regency, its nature, and the person who should exercise it.

From his proximity of blood, there could be no competitor with Gloucester, as the fittest person; but he was not made regent. The precedent under Henry VI. of appointing a protector and defender only, was carefully followed;²⁴ and, in that instance, the exercise of the royal authority was intrusted to a superadded council of regency.²⁵ From a loss of the parliamentary documents, we cannot specify from the records, the members of this council, as in the case of Henry VI.; but the names of those who acted will afterwards appear. Gloucester seems to have been first nominated, or suggested to be protector, by the government council.

On the 13th of May, a new parliament was summoned to meet on the 25th day of June;²⁶ yet a

²² More, 173.

²³ More says, of both him and his brother, that they ‘had as many gifts of nature; as many princely virtues; as much goodly towardness, as their age could receive.’ p. 152. Rous describes him as of ‘mirabilis ingenii, et in literatura, pro tempore suo, optime expeditus.’ p. 212.

²⁴ ‘Acceptit illum solennem magistratum, qui duci Hunfrido Glocestre, stante minore aetate regis Henrici, ut regni protector appellaretur, olim contingebat.’ Hist. Croyl. 566. ²⁵ See before, v. 2. p. 484.

²⁶ We learn this new fact from the register at Lambeth, which has preserved the summons to the archbishop; it is dated 13 May, and states, that the king had ordered a Parliament to meet on the 25 June. It has been printed in the Royal Wills, p. 347. As it does not mention the protectorate, it shews that this did not exist on 13 May.

BOOK IV. parliamentary meeting took place in May, for the historian of Croyland mentions, “that the residence of Edward was discussed” in the senate; and I have found the copy of a speech delivered from the throne,²⁷ to the three estates of the kingdom, as assembled in parliament, in the name of Edward V. and in his presence, as also before the duke of Gloucester. The probability is, that the late king’s chancellor and ministry continuing at first in office, collected the members of the parliament existing at his demise, to meet for present exigencies; and that a new one was ordered to be summoned.²⁸ This official speech proves, that the youthful sovereign was brought by his uncle to meet his parliament in the usual royal manner.²⁹ The address is made to it, not in the protector’s name, but in the sovereign’s;³⁰ it was delivered to the lords and commons in Edward’s presence, whom he styles “Kyng Edward the Fifth.”³¹

²⁷ It is in the Cotton MSS. Vitell. E 10. It has been so much injured by fire, and is so burnt round the edges, that the commencement and speaker’s name are destroyed. Like most of the speeches by which parliament was then opened, if a bishop was the chancellor, it begins with a scripture ‘texte, such as I found yn the divine service of yestyrday’s fest.’ These words imply that the speech was made on a Monday.

²⁸ As the first act of Richard, as protector, is dated the 19th May, and the first grant of Edward from the Tower is on the same day, and as that day in May 1483 was on a Monday, I would infer that this speech was delivered, and the protectorate appointed, on the 19th May. The two acts alluded to are in Harl. MSS. N° 433.

²⁹ After mentioning, that in kingdoms ‘theyr public body ys compowned of three notable partes; the prince, the nobles, and the people,’ —it adds, ‘and therefore having to speke at thys tyme of all three as *they be nowe here assembled* for the wele of thyss most noble and famous reme of Engeland.’ MSS. Vitel. E 10.

³⁰ The speaker says, ‘My mynd is, that thyss schuld be the word of the kyng, and by me to be spoken at thys tyme in hys name.’—He then personifies his royal master, and adds, ‘God hath called me at my tender age, to be your kyng and sovereign.’—MSS. ib.

³¹ After his texte he says, ‘the whych to my purpose implyeth the present estate of our nobles, our commons, and our glorious prince and kyng, Edward the Fifth, *here present*.’—In another part he mentioned, ‘Wele ys this young prince our sovereign lord here present, set between two

This speech was made to both lords and commons, as if in full parliament before the throne.⁴³ The king is there spoken of to his people in terms of the highest eulogy,⁴⁴ Gloucester himself attending; a source of popularity to Edward, which his uncle would never have suffered, if he had then intended to depose him.⁴⁵

That it was a parliamentary body he was addressing, appears from its being expressly so mentioned.⁴⁶

brethren, that one his fadry; that other hys uncle:—This would seem to imply, that there was some picture or statue of the late king near the throne. It proceeds, ‘The rule of the first (his father) is determined by the over-hastely course of nature. The second (Gloucester) is ordeyned as next in perfect age of the blod ryall, to be hys tutor and protector, to take example of majorall kunningy, felicite, and experiance.’ MSS. Vitel. E 10.

“ The speaker, representing the king, says, ‘ First, to you, right noble lordys spiritual and temporal; secondly, to you, worshipful syrres, representing the commons, God hath called me, at my tender age, to be your kyng and sovereign.’ MSS. ib.—In the quaint style of that day, which was thought rich eloquence, it digresses to state, that ‘ the cosmographers, which have left to us in their writings the description of the round world,’ had divided it into land and water, with rivers. This was to lay a basis for the following comparison:—‘ And therefore the noble persons of the world, which some for the merth of their ancestors; some for their own, virtues, been endued with gret bavours, possessions, and richesses, may more conveniently be resembled unto the *ferme ground* that men see in the land. Then the common people, which for lack of such endument not possible to be departed among so many, and therefore living by their casual labours, be, not without cause, likened to the unstable and wavering running water.’—MSS. ib.

“ After mentioning the grants from parliament to other kings, he exclaims, in a very ingenious appeal to their liberality, ‘ Who can suppose, but that they that see the most toward and virtuous disposition of our sovereign lord that now is; his gentyl witte, and ripe understanding, far passing the nature of his youth;—who can think, but that the lords and commons of this land will as agreeably purvey for the sure maintenance of his high estate, as any of their predecessors have done to any other kyng of England afore?’ MSS. ib.

“ The speech also praises Gloucester: ‘ considered the necessary charge, which, in the tyme of the kyng’s tender age, must nedely be borne and supported by the right noble and famous prince the duke of Gloucestre, his uncle, protector of the reme; in whose great prudence, wisdom, and fortunes, restyth, at this seson, the execution of the defence of this reme; as well against the open enemies as against the *subbyl and faynt friends* of the same.’ MSS. ib. It also says, ‘ of the tutele and oversight of the kyng’s most royal person during the years of tenderness, my said lord protector will acquit himself like to Marcus Emilius Lepidus.’ MSS. ib.

“ ‘ The power and auctorite of my lord protector is so behoefull and

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

He urges it to confirm to Richard his title of Protector, "That at the departyng of the lordys, and of such as ben here for the commons, everich to their proper home, the armes, hand and fete of thys gret body of England ; the kyng may have cause largely to rejoysse, and say to my lord protector, his uncle, here present, ' Uncle ! I am glad to have you confirmed in this place, to be my protector.'"⁴⁴

We have no official detail of what was done in this parliamentary meeting. That Richard was appointed protector, appears from all the subsequent events ; and it is mentioned, that it was publicly discussed in the senate,⁴⁵ in what more suitable place than the bishop's palace the king should reside. Some named the priory of St. John's, Clerkenwell, and others Westminster ; but Buckingham recommending the Tower, this was thought to be so proper, that even they who had wished otherwise, assented to it ;⁴⁶ and the king removed thither. The coronation was recommended to be about Midsummer.

of reason to be assented and established by the auctorite of *this hygh court*, that among all the causes of the assembling of the parliament in *thys tyme of the yere*, *thys* is the grettest and most necessarie to be afsermed. God graunte, that this matter, and sych others as of necessite owith to be first moved for the use of the kyng, and the defence of thy lond, may have suche goode expedition yn *thys hygh courte of parliament*, as the ease of the people, and the condition and the tyme requireth.
MSS. ib. Vitel. E 10.

MSS. ib. The speech ends with this intimation, which proves that Richard had been named protector before, by the lords of the council, as More intimates, p. 172 ; and that it did not become a parliamentary appointment until the end of May. This is an important fact in distinguishing Richard's real plans and motives ; because it shews, that he had not been fully seated in this dignity until this time ; and therefore till the parliament affirmed it, the honor remained in sufficient doubt and uncertainty, considering the state of parties, to agitate Richard's mind.

⁴⁴ Hist. Croyl. 'Sermo in senatu.' p. 566.

⁴⁵ 'In ejus sententiam ab omnibus etiam qui id noblebant verbis, itum est. Ib. By Edward's grants it appears, that he was in the bishop's palace on the 9th May, and in the Tower on the 19th. Harl. MSS. N° 433. p. 221, 2.

We shall misconceive the state of things, if we suppose that Richard had, at this moment, the power of commanding events, or of perpetrating what he pleased; or could as he wished control the king. He had at this period no military force of his own, to overawe any party; for that which he afterwards wanted and obtained, did not come up till the end of June, after he had taken the throne.⁵⁹ He was now in the same sea of trouble, ambition, and conflict, in which all the great men were then engaged; and was in equal danger and in equal uncertainty, even of his own interests and dignity, as any of those who then surrounded him.

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

His political position, at this juncture, has not been considered; but if duly contemplated, will be found to have been peculiar and critical. He was not made regent, like his father in Henry's illness, but he was appointed protector, after the precedent of the same dignity, in the minority of Henry VI.; but this, as already mentioned, conferred no actual power. It invested him with nominal and presiding dignity, but made him only one of the lords of the council of regency.⁶⁰ This precedent left him under the anxiety of even this conferred dignity ceasing as soon as Edward was crowned. No writer has attended to this fact. Henry VI. was crowned at eight years of age, for the express purpose of terminating the protective office.⁶¹ According to this precedent, Richard's dignity would cease at Edward's coronation, and if so, would not last two months. Hence the question could not fail to be in Gloucester's mind, Whether it

⁵⁹ See further. pp. 421, 428 of this volume.

⁶⁰ See before, p. 387, ib.

⁶¹ See before, p. 2.

BOOK IV. was meant, that he should be dispossessed of it, like his namesake, at that period. This would, in the first instance, depend on what the majority of the cabinet council, or council of regency, should determine; and this majority would either rest on the conduct of Hastings, or on the superior influence of the queen's party, if that should be the greatest. The same point would also remain in the decision of the new parliament, which was to meet on the 25th of June. If thus degraded, he would be like the former Gloucester, but a lord of regency; thwarted, disregarded, endangered; and at last attacked, as he was.⁵²

For he had been led to place himself in still greater personal jeopardy than that unfortunate prince. That by acquiescing in the plans of Buckingham and Hastings to arrest Rivers and Grey, he had deeply offended these nobles and the king, and also the queen, is palpable, and is confessed. He had therefore every thing to dread from the royal resentment, as Buckingham and Hastings also had, as soon as the king attained a fuller age. The queen did not disguise her mistrust and dread.⁵³ Gloucester had therefore nothing but peril before him; and needed as much protection and assistance as any other of the then agitated peerage.

But from whom could Gloucester procure this aid and safety? He could not obtain it from the nation against the king, without direct rebellion, civil war, and all its crimes and evils. His strength could only be made up by the adhesion to his interest of the powerful great. But from which of these was he to acquire that cordial alliance and co-operation which would prolong his protectorate, shield him against

⁵² See before, p. 42, &c.

⁵³ More, 170, 192.

the king's future anger, and against the present effect and plans of all those who, knowing the king's feelings and wishes, would be every day confederating against him? Who would erect for him a general banner of safety, in that stormy day, against the competitions and combinations of the nobles themselves, and amid the conflict and alarms of the church establishment, and of the emerging feelings and antipathies of the people?

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

The leaders of the church, who were in the council, were not his friends. They had been in the confidence of Edward; they favored his queen—they would not fail to ally themselves with her son. Indeed, their relation, as the chosen executors of his last will,⁵⁴ made this bias a species of pious duty, in addition to their moral loyalty. Rotheram, the archbishop of York, having displayed an instability of mind, or being less able, was displaced; and John Russell, the bishop of Lincoln, was appointed the lord chancellor, in his stead.⁵⁵ His abilities and character are highly praised;⁵⁶ but he had been Edward's privy seal, and therefore was to be considered as one of the supporters of the young king's interests, and, as connected with them, of his feelings likewise.

Morton, the bishop of Ely, was decidedly on that side; and being a man of very superior talents,⁵⁷ would probably take the lead against the protector, as

⁵⁴ The executors appointed by Edward IV. were, the archbishop of York, the bishops of Lincoln, Chichester, and Ely; Hastings, Stanley, and sir Thomas Montgomery. Royal Wills, p. 348. The will is not now extant.

⁵⁵ More, 174.

⁵⁶ 'A wise man and a good, and of much experience, and one of the best learned men, undoubtedly, that England had in his time.' More, p. 174.

⁵⁷ See his character in More's Hist. 254, 5. But sir Thomas describes him most fully in the Utopia, p. 20.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

the cardinal of Winchester had done under Henry VI. It was not, therefore, on the ecclesiastical part of the ruling council, that Gloucester could rely for his support.

Of the lay lords, the most prominent, the most powerful, the most active, and the most formidable, and one of the most ambitious, was Hastings. Grateful for twenty years of patronage and kindness from Edward IV. he was the natural and zealous friend of his son, with no limitation but his resentment against Rivers, for former competitions and conceived wrongs, and from present rivalry and alarm. He had joined Gloucester, to put down Rivers and the Greys, not from affection to Richard, or from alienation to Edward, but from fear and aversion to them. Their arrest and imprisonment took them out of the present field of ambition, and made him the most important friend of the young king; and the natural centre in the metropolis, of all the feelings, interests, and passions, that were attached to Edward's power and reign. This position put Hastings into the first rank of opposition against Gloucester. He stood as the bulwark, shield, and sword of all the parties, and their interests, who did not make Gloucester their patron. Whether he chose it or not, the natural state of things thus placed and kept him: and the release of Rivers, to dispute with him the pre-eminence as the king's friend, could alone alter this situation.

Hence it does not seem possible, that Hastings and Gloucester could long act cordially together. But as the protector had the Rivers and Grey in the hands of his friends, he possessed some control over the mind of the lord chamberlain. To make his power and influence certain, against these dangerous, and

now indignant, tho' imprisoned rivals, Hastings, had concurred in council to have them tried and executed.⁵⁸ It was the selfish interest of Hastings to obtain this foul act, because while they lived, Gloucester might seek to please the king, by liberating and uniting with them ; and that would ensure the destruction of the hostile chamberlain : and if the protector did not use this policy, nor threaten it, yet if by any other means they should obtain their release, they would immediately supersede him in the affections of his sovereign.

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

The party whom we have called the queen's friends, tho' from the king's identity of feeling with them; they may be now more properly considered as his interior and immediate party, is represented in the speech, ascribed by More to Hastings, as equal in strength to what opposed them.⁵⁹ Two of their leaders, the marquis of Dorset and lord Lyle, were yet in the metropolis, tho' in sanctuary ; and therefore this body of active partisans, whom every day of the king's reign would, from natural expectation of future advantages, increase, was peculiarly formidable to Richard. It was irreconcilable with his protectorship and interests ; and from the dreaded part which he had taken against Rivers and Grey, it was personally threatening, both to his liberty and life. Stanley was another nobleman, attached to the late king, who befriended, tho' more disinterestedly than Hastings, the young sovereign and his future sway.

⁵⁸ See More, 202. 207. 214. Hastings expected them to be beheaded the day he was arrested. Ib.

⁵⁹ Hastings so put the case, in his address to the council, after the onset at Northampton ; 'which strife, if it should hap, as it were likely, to come to a field, *tho' both parties were in all other things equal*, yet should the authority be on that side where the king is himself.' More, 172.

BOOK IV. To combat all these opposing powers, Richard found some nobles, at present, from their own interested motives, desirous to ally with him. These were the aspiring great, who were not in official situations at Edward's death—Buckingham, and the lords Howard, Lovel, and Northumberland; with others of inferior rank, who sought promotion under him, as sir Richard Ratcliff, the Brakenburys, Tyrrells, and a few others.

In calculating his future position and perils, Richard had likewise to recollect, that the duke of Gloucester, in the reign of Richard II. had been destroyed by that king, from political oppositions, altho his uncle :⁵⁰ and that the last duke of Gloucester, notwithstanding he was uncle to the reigning sovereign, and his presumptive heir, had, with the use or abuse of the royal authority, been arrested; and that his imprisonment had been followed by an immediate mysterious death.⁵¹

Richard could not be blind to the motives of Hastings, in pressing the deaths of Rivers and Grey; and this may have been one of his inducements to delay any further proceedings against them. But this delay would also tend to cause Hastings to mistrust Gloucester's future intentions.

Thus stood Hastings and Gloucester with respect to each other, on the king's arrival in London. The life or death of either depended on the conduct which each should adopt towards the king and his friends, as well as towards each other. The union of either with the king's friends was certain to be the degradation or destruction of the other.

⁵⁰ See the 2nd vol. of this History, p. 305.

⁵¹ See before, pp. 48, 49.

- Nothing could prevent the danger which hung over every one of these great nobles, but a general coalition and reconciliation of all. As the public anxiety for internal peace, and the dread of that civil warfare which all thought to be likely, were very great, we cannot doubt that every effort was made to accomplish this end. The principal churchmen were deeply interested in the maintenance of peace, and must have labored to produce it; but the pride and passions, and worldly interests of the competing parties, prevented this happy result. Rivers and Grey were still detained; Hastings continued hostile to them; the queen remained in sanctuary; her son Dorset, and her other relations, kept themselves in the same state. The king was therefore unfriendly to the protector and Buckingham, who had begun the attack on his beloved relations; and all the jealousies, expectations and apprehensions of the contending great, remained as strong and as unappeased as before. The monk of Croyland mentions, that Hastings publicly exulted, that the government had been taken from the queen's family without any bloodshed, and that all men hoped for peace and prosperity; but that the continued detention of Rivers and Grey, and the protector's not exhibiting a courteous attention to the queen's honor and safety, created some doubts and anxieties.^{aa}

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

From causes not explained, but probably resulting from this disordered state of things, the executors of the late king deferred the proving of his will, or intermeddling with his property;^{ab} and, in consequence

^{aa} Croyl. 566.

^{ab} See the extracts from the Lambeth Register, in the Royal Wills, p. 347.

BOOK IV.

REIGN OF EDW. V.

of this conduct, on the 12th of May, the two archbishops and eight bishops met Gloucester and Buckingham, Hastings, Stanley, and some other noblemen, at the king's grandmother's, the duchess of York, at her house near St. Paul's wharf ; and the cardinal of Canterbury put all the late king's jewels under ecclesiastical sequestration, that they might not be wasted.⁴⁴ Nothing more strongly implies the unsettled condition of the kingdom and government, than this measure. Neither party could let the other have the advantage of the possession of so much property ; therefore the executors would not act ; and it was placed in a state of neutrality, out of the immediate reach of either. Eleven days afterwards, the ecclesiastical authority was resorted to, that enough might be sold to pay the expenses of the funeral.⁴⁵

Richard had before him but three courses to chuse from, for his future path of action. A coalition with the king's friends and family ; a cordial union with Hastings ; or the formation of a distinct interest, independent of both the former, and capable of maintaining itself against them.

The most natural, the most loyal, and the most moral path, was to have pleased the king and queen, by releasing Rivers and Grey, and by coalescing with them against all their enemies. But in the unfortunate state of the opposing resentments and interests, this could not be done without opposing or destroying

⁴⁴ Royal Wills, p. 347. One of these bishops was Alcock, bishop of Worcester, which shews, that on the 12th May, the king had procured leave for him to come to London, tho' he had been driven from him at Northampton. The other bishops were, Kemp, of London; Wainfleet, of Winchester; Stillington, of Bath and Wells; Story, of Chichester; Russell, of Lincoln; Morton, of Ely; and Audley, of Rochester. Royal Wills, 947.

⁴⁵ The expenses of the king's funeral were stated to be £. 1,496. 17 s. 2 d. Ib. 348.

Hastings and Buckingham, Howard, and probably others of the nobility : and it was not probable that their destruction could be accomplished without a previous war. But by coinciding so immediately with the politics of Buckingham and Hastings at Northampton, he had fettered himself strongly, with all the ties of honor, not to attempt this coalition. It is also probable, that the hints which were conveyed to Buckingham, on the same points, were also suggested, or occurred to himself ; namely, that he had already sinned unpardonably against the king and queen mother, and her friends, by the alarm and disgrace to which he had subjected them ; and that they would use, but never cordially forgive him.* Richard had taken the wrong step, in acquiescing with his Northampton advisers ; and he could not now retrieve it. Personal ambition, and his former differences with the queen and her friends, concurred to lead him to the determination not to ally with them.

The next question would be, Was a cordial union with Hastings practicable ? but this would depend upon another, Whether this lord desired it on such terms as Richard could concede ?

Buckingham had attached himself to Richard ; hence, before any stable union could take place between Hastings and the protector, it must be decided whether Hastings or Buckingham, and their respective friends, should have the pre-eminence in the new administration, and its consequential benefits. If there had been no aspiring Buckingham, Howard or Lovel, it is probable that Hastings and Richard could have soon agreed on the king's coronation, and

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

* See More, 196.

BOOK IV. on a protracted protectorate. Hastings would have willingly become his first minister, and Richard would not have molested his nephew's reign. But for this to take place, Buckingham must be disappointed, and made inferior; or Hastings, accustomed to fill the first situation at court and office, must suddenly consent to be subordinate to a new aspirant. There was nothing in all the feelings and habits that composed an ambitious nobleman of that day, which could submit to this. Hastings and Buckingham stood in this irreconcilable relation, and with these unappeasable jealousies towards each other ;^a and as Richard must have quarrelled with the duke, to satisfy the chamberlain, it was scarcely possible that they could coalesce. That Richard loved Hastings, and tried to persuade him to co-operate with him, is stated by More ;^b tho he makes the point of difference, suggestions as to the elevation of Richard to the throne. It is more probable that the first negotiations were for a prolonged protectorate during the king's minority, and a cordial coalition of their parties and interests ; and that these friendly efforts failed, because the interest and ambition of Buckingham and Hastings could not be united.

The third course, that which Richard adopted, was the formation of a distinct and independent interest of his own, capable of standing against every other, and beating down what opposed. Four noblemen, three of the greatest weight and rank, offered themselves for this purpose, and solicited him to pursue it ; the duke of Buckingham, lord Howard, lord

^a More says of them, ‘ These two, *not bearing to each other so much love as hatred both unto the queen's party.*’ p. 163.

^b More, 200.

Lovel, and the earl of Northumberland. It was their interest that he should not coalesce with either Hastings or the Woodvilles ; and they united with him against them. How far they looked forward to the inevitable result of this policy at the outset, we cannot now determine. It is probable, that they considered nothing but the humiliation, imprisonment, exile, or even destruction of the individual nobles who opposed them ; and they may have thought, that the deaths of Rivers, Hastings and Grey, would be sufficient to beat down all competition, and to establish their power, and to continue Richard's protectorship. To these events, the noble consciences of that day cherished no repugnance. It was in the common course of their competitions to do such things, which had been in several reigns repeated without scruple. With these sentiments, they prepared to co-operate, without hesitation, in these direful incidents ; and Richard himself may at first have acted with the same self-blinded view. These violences, however, would be soon found to make other actions, still more revolting, tho scarcely more criminal, necessary ; and in determining on this course, Richard virtually, tho not, perhaps, at first intentionally, resolved to perpetrate all that followed, and which he ought to have foreseen was certain to ensue.

The young king's real situation, at this period, must be also adverted to. There is neither any appearance, nor any probability, that he was immured or secluded. His meeting the lords and commons in parliament^{**} — his residence in the Tower being appointed by them — his public acts signed, on some

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

^{**} See before, p. 388. (note 39.).

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

days in the Tower, and on others at Westminster⁷⁰ — the presence of the bishop, his preceptor, in London⁷¹ — the interest of all parties to conciliate him — the zealous friendship of Hastings, Stanley, and the great clergy for him, and the popular attachment to him, leave us no doubt that, during the month of May, and in the first two weeks of June, he was under no confinement, or unroyal restraint. Up to this period, all that was done appears to have been transacted with the approbation or concurrence of the head nobility; and therefore it seems reasonable to infer, that the usual access to minor kings was not denied to all suitable persons. With this previous review of the actual state of things, we proceed to narrate such of the succeeding incidents as the scanty materials that we can now procure will enable us to detail.

On the 13th of May, the four great friends of Richard's distinct party received liberal grants. Lord Howard was made head seneschal of the duchy of Lancaster, and admiral of England, with other large fees;⁷² and the next day, Buckingham was appointed constable of all the castles in five counties, capital justiciary and chamberlain of North and South Wales, and of various castles there, and also constable and seneschal of Monmouth and the duchy of Lancaster.⁷³ Lord Lovel was also benefited by the office of chief butler, which Rivers had enjoyed;⁷⁴ and to one of the Nevilles was given Pomfret castle.⁷⁵ Thus the

⁷⁰ There are six royal acts dated from Westminster, in the months of May and June, 12 Rym. 180-7. These imply, that Edward went from the Tower to meet his council at Westminster, as occasion required.

⁷¹ See before, p. 388.

⁷² Harl. MSS. N° 433, p. 23-6. Several manors were also given to him; and his son was made steward of the same duchy in Norfolk. Ib.

⁷³ Harl. MSS. p. 6-12.

⁷⁴ Ib. p. 223.

⁷⁵ Ib.

aspiring nobles were gratified, as well as the official ones ; and the queen's relations only had hitherto suffered.

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

Every one exists amid surrounding circles of circumstances, and with varying successions of events, by which he will be materially affected in the following periods of his life. These are what may be called the impelling necessities of things to him, and they will considerably influence his conduct. If he be a weak man, and of no moral energies, education or habits, they will probably govern him, as animals are overruled by what acts upon their senses, who obey the immediate motive, without any foresight or consideration of the consequences. But every intelligent being knows that he has a reason to use, and duties to perform; and that he must discern and select from the impelling circumstances that approach him, those which he ought to obey, and those which he ought to resist. We all know, that we have to consider the consequences of what we may be urged to do, both to ourselves and to others. We soon learn, if we chuse, that we may acquire the habit of exerting this foresight, and of making the selection; and we ought not to yield to any impulse or persuasion that will occasion us to injure another's welfare, or our own. If our temper be too feeble to use this discrimination, we are invited to apply for superior assistance.

Richard was, like other men, surrounded with circumstances that were connected with evil, as well as with those which were associated with good. Like all men, he had to make his election between these; and his moral freedom was equal to his moral obligations. His choice lay among difficulties, dangers

BOOK IV. and temptations, but so does every man's path ; and it is this which makes self-government, wise tuition, fixed principles, and the divine aid, so essential to us all. The daily experience of life gives constant evidence, that these are attainable by every one who will direct his mind to their acquisition ; and perhaps our greatest safeguard is, to cultivate not only that moral delicacy of spirit, which, like Almoran's ring, will pain us at the first approach of what is wrong ; but also the habit of immediately obeying its admonition, and abstaining from what it censures, tho we may not be immediately satisfied why the forbearance should be necessary.

The month of May closed, and June opened with these conflicting interests unreconciled, and therefore with all the materials of storm preparing to explode ; tho it was not as yet certain who would be the first aggressors, or who the earliest victims.

On the 5th of June, the protector proceeded to announce Edward's coronation to have been fixed for the 22d of that month ; and he caused official letters to be written, in the king's name, to forty esquires, summoning them to prepare themselves to receive, as the document expresses, "the noble order of knighthood, at our coronation, which, by God's grace, we intend shall be solemnized on the 22d day of this present month, at our palace of Westminster ; commanding you to be here at our Tower of London, four days afore our said coronation, to have communication of our commands."⁷⁶ The protector also

⁷⁶ This letter is copied in the Harl. MSS. No 433. p. 227, and has been printed by Rymer, v. 12. p. 185. It is addressed to Otes Gilbert, esquire, and purports to be, 'by the advice of our dearest uncle the duc of Gloucester, protector of this oure royaume during our yong age, and of the lords of our counsel.' Ib.

sent for the lords, from all parts of the realm, to be present at the ceremony.⁷⁷

On the 8th June—it is necessary to advance by days, and to mark them with precision, in order to elicit the exact truth amid so much obscurity and prejudice—this political harmony continued unbroken. On that day, Gloucester wrote a letter, from the Tower, to the mayor and corporation of York, reciting their application to him to move the king for a diminution of their yearly payments to him, in consideration of the expences they had incurred in the public service: and stating to them, that he had not then convenient leisure to accomplish their business; but declaring that he would be their especial good and loving lord. He ended, by recommending his servant Thomas Brackenbury, the bearer of the letter, to their credence and favor.⁷⁸

But two days afterwards a document appears, preserved also in the public records at York, which shews that the political serenity had suddenly changed into an aspect of the most fearful storm. On the 10th of June, the protector sent sir Richard Ratcliffe from London, with a letter to the same mayor and corporation,⁷⁹ written in a tone of emphatic earnestness

⁷⁷ More's words are, 'The lords being sent for from all parts of the realm, came thick to that solemnity.' p. 197.

⁷⁸ Mr. Drake has printed this document, ex libro chart. at York, in his Eboracum, p. 115. The corporation's letter of supplication to Gloucester, had been delivered to him by *John Brackenbury*; and he returned this answer by *Thomas Brackenbury*. It is thus dated: 'Given under our signet, at the Tower of London, the 8th day of June.' Ib.

⁷⁹ We will give this important letter at length, that the reader may judge for himself of the urgency of its style and feeling.

' The duc of Gloucestre, brother and uncle of kynges, protectour, defensour, gret chamberleyne, constable, and admirall of England.

' Right trusty and well beloved, wee greet you well. And us you love the wele of us, and the wele and surely of your own self, we heartily pray you to come up unto us to London, in all the diligence ye can pos-

BOOK IV. and alarm ; charging the queen, and “ her bloody adherents and affinity,” with intending to murder and destroy him and the duke of Buckingham, and the old royal blood of the realm ; and urging the city authorities at York, to come up to London in all the diligence possible, with as many as they could have defensibly arrayed, to aid and assist him. He conjures them not to fail, but to hasten to him.⁶⁰

REIGN OF EDW. V.

The particular facts which occurred, or had been discovered by Richard, between the 8th and the 10th of June, that thus excited and endangered him and Buckingham, beyond the general state of things, have not been transmitted to us. Ratcliffe was instructed to shew to the corporation of York, “ the subtle and dampnable ways” of the queen and her adherents ; but they are not particularized in any existing record.

This document being addressed to a public corporation, may be thought too official or artificial to shew the real feelings of the protector, because the language of such applications is often that of the convenient and the factitious. But the same agitation and earnestness also appear in Richard’s more private letter on the next day, to lord Nevyll. In this

sible, after the sight hereof, with as many as ye can make defensively arrayed ; there to aid and assist us against the queen, her bloody adherents and affinity, which have entended, and daily do entend, to murder and utterly destroy us and our cousyn the duc of Buckingham, and the old royal blood of the realm : And as it is now *openly known* by their subtle and dampnable wais forecasted the same ; and also the final destruction and disherison of you and all odyr the enheriters and men of honor, as well of the north part, as odyr countreyes that belongen unto us ; as our trusty servant, this bearer, shall more at large show you ; to whom we pray you to give credence, and as ever we may do for you in tyme comyng. Fail not ; but haste you to us. Given under our signet at London, the 10th of June.’ Drake’s Eboracum, p. 115.

⁶⁰ The York record states, that this letter was delivered by sir Richard Ratcliffe to the mayor, on the 15th June. Drake, Ib.

there was likely to be less disguise, more nature, and a more genuine expression of the true state of the existing circumstances, and of his interior sentiments. But this is as urgent in its solicitation for immediate aid, and betrays the same personal alarm as the public dispatch to the lord mayor of York; tho, being an appeal to the private attachment of an individual, it omits to state the particular causes of the application, or to describe the pressing emergency of the case.⁸¹

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

The appointment of the coronation for the 22d, and of the meeting of parliament for the 25th of June, made the question every day more pressing, Whether the protectorate should then cease, or be continued. Friendly negotiations having failed to produce a cordial coalition, we can have little doubt that both parties were preparing to decide it by a trial of strength. As the lords came in, the adherents of each would increase; and it only remained to see who would have the greatest power, and could strike the first blow. Richard charged Hastings with having contrived and settled to seize him, on that day on which he secured the lord chamberlain, by anticipating violence.

⁸¹ We owe the publication of this important letter to Mr. Serjeant Frere, the editor of the last volume of the Fenn Letters. It is thus worded: ‘ To my lord Nevill in haste. My lord Nevill, I recommend me to you as heartily as I can; and as ever ye love me, and your own weal and surety, and this realm, that ye come to me with that ye may make, defensibly arrayed, in all the haste that is possible; and that ye will give credence to . . . Richard Radclif this bearer, whom I now do send to you instructed with all my mind and intent.

‘ And my lord! do me now good service, as ye have always before done; and I trust now so to remember you, as shall be the making of you and yours; and God send you good fortunes. Written at London the 11th day of June, with the hand of,

Your heartily loving Cousin and Master,
R. GLOUCESTER.’

This was taken from the copy of some letters found at Raby Castle in Durham. Fenn’s Orig. Lett. vol. 5. p. 303.

**BOOK
IV.**

**REIGN OF
EDW. V.**

We cannot now decide, with certainty, on their mutual accusations. But that the king and queen's friends, and all who did not unite with Richard, would make use of the coronation to end the protectorship, is highly probable, from the recollection of Henry's precedent. The government would then be wholly lodged, as it was under him, in a council of lords or regency; and these would be selected from the adherents of the dominant faction. Hence, as the coronation of Edward came nearer, it tended to bring all the intrigues and ambition of the yet contending interests to an actual explosion: and to present an epoch peculiarly dangerous to Gloucester's authority, and, unless he patiently acquiesced in his own degradation, also to his life. No one of the former minor kings, Henry III. Edward III. Richard II. or Henry VI. had a protector after they were crowned.

I have searched to see if any document could be found, that would ascertain whether attempts were making, at this crisis, to put aside the protector; and I have observed two documents, whose application to this dark and difficult subject has not been yet noticed, which seem to me to imply, that Richard's allegation of intrigues against him was not so unfounded as it is usually represented. I will state the impression they make on my mind; my readers must judge for themselves.

From the time that Richard was appointed protector by the parliament, the legal style of the royal acts and grants became, "by the advice of our uncle, Richard duke of Gloucester, protector and defender."²²

²² The grants in the name of Edward V. of the 19th, 20th, 21st, 23d, 25th, 27th, 28th, 31st May, and of the 2d and 5th June, all in the

CHAP.
VII.REIGN OF
EDW. V.

This phrase appears in the first instrument that was made after this dignity had been conferred; and it is an invariable part of every other dated from the Tower, up to the fifth of June. All the acts of the crown, executed with Richard's **privy**, were thus done with the expressed concurrence of the protector: and from the natural jealousy of new power, we cannot doubt that he would never allow the important expressions to be omitted in any public paper that he knew of, or that originated from him; they became a necessary part of the legal official phraseology; nor would they be left out, without some purpose adverse to his government.⁸³

But there are two royal grants remaining, dated after the annunciation of the day of the coronation, and before the arrest of Hastings, which omit these expressions; and, by the omission, purport to be made by the king's own instrumentality, without the protector's concurrence or authority. These are, one dated the 9th of June, being a restitution of temporalities to a prior; and another, of the 12th of June, appointing a king's serjeant at law;⁸⁴ both important legal acts, and both dated from Westminster, and not from the Tower.

This omission cannot be easily conceived to have been accidental, because legal formularies, being drawn by official persons, always follow legal precedents; and the addition, of the protector's advice,

Harl. MSS. N° 433, except the 27th, which is in Rymer 12. p. 184, have this legal form and addition; and almost all of them are dated from the Tower, where the king resided.

⁸³ It was as necessary and essential for this legal form to be observed in all official documents then emanating from the crown, as it was, during the Regency established in our late Sovereign's incapacity, to insert the formulay 'in the name and on the behalf of His Majesty.'

⁸⁴ These important instruments are in Rymer's *Fœdera*, v. 12. p. 186.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

had become a formal part of the royal grants, which was as important to him always to retain, as it was alarming to his authority to expunge. These two grants, thus defective in leaving out the protector's concurrence, became a species of presumptive evidence that these were done without his concurrence; and that some persons were inciting the king to act of his own authority, without the protector's sanction; and such conduct would be the first step to put aside or to nullify Richard's appointment.⁸⁵

The minds of both Buckingham and Hastings appear to have been, at this juncture, in much perturbation. Each having now to pass both the moral and political Rubicon, contemplated with anxiety as well the past as the future. Buckingham is described as deliberating, whether to continue to act with the protector, or to quit him; till suggestions were made to him, that he had done too much to secede.⁸⁶ Hastings also, who had exhorted Richard to assume the care of the young king, is stated to have repented of it; and to have convoked a meeting of Edward's most zealous friends at St. Paul's,

⁸⁵ There are but two other documents without this addition, on 16th and 20th May, 12 Rym. 179-181. But of these, one precedes his parliamentary appointment; and the other was but the next day, before the new official style was known or settled. But both these are remarkable for being dated from *Westminster*, like the two of the 9th and 12th June, where the council most hostile to him would meet. After the parliamentary appointment, it was dangerous to the protector to omit this phrase, as that would be dispensing with his advice and authority, and using the royal power in public without it. Hence, it looks like an overt act of some meditated hostility against it.

⁸⁶ ‘The matter was broken unto the duke by subtle folks, and such as were then craft masters in the handling of such wicked devices; who declared unto him, that the young king was offended with him for his kinsfolks sakes, and that if he were able he would revenge them.’ They also remarked, that Rivers and Grey would urge the king to this ‘if they escaped, for they would remember their imprisonment; or else, if they were put to death, without doubt the young king would be careful for their deaths, as their imprisonment was grievous unto him.’ More, 196.

and to have discussed with them what was the most expedient to be done.⁸⁷ An act like this was the commencement of direct hostilities against the protector.

It was quite natural that Gloucester and Buckingham should, as these contending views and interests were in agitation, think it fit, or find it necessary, to hold councils with their own friends at Crosby House, distinct from the councils in which the two archbishops, the bishop of Ely, and lords Hastings and Stanley met;⁸⁸ and it certainly implies, that these two bodies were now meditating far different measures. The probability is that both parties, at this critical moment, had their secret meetings. The leaders of those from whom Gloucester and Buckingham were separating, were the three ecclesiastical prelates above named, combined with Hastings and Stanley. Of these church statesmen, two of them were peculiarly attached to the queen's party, and hostile to Richard. That these two cabinet councils knew of each other's existence, is evident, from Stanley remarking and expressing to Hastings, his dislike of Gloucester's separate consultations;⁸⁹ but Hastings, instead of countenancing any alarm at the

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

⁸⁷ Polydore Virgil mentions this circumstance; he says, that Hastings, who from his enmity to the queen's relations, 'hortatus erat Ricardum ad suscipiendam curam principis; cum vidisset omnia, jam spectare ad arma, et multo secus cadere ac putaratur, *facti sui paniens*, ad *ædem* Divo Pauli, amicos, quibus magnæ curse, vitam dignitatem, amplitudinem Edwardi principis esse sciebat, in unum convocat, atque quid agendum sit, cum eis disputat.' p. 540.

⁸⁸ More informs us of this fact, and that 'by little and little, all folk withdrew from the Tower; and drew to Crosby's-place, in Bishopsgate-street, where the protector kept his household.' p. 198.

⁸⁹ Richard's separate council at Crosby-place was not therefore a secret thing. More says, 'Lord Stanley said unto the lord Hastings, that he much disliked these two several councils: 'For while we,' quoth he, 'talk of one matter in the one place, little wot we whereof they talk in the other place.' 199.

circumstance, assured him, that he had a spy in one of the protector's council, who would immediately communicate to him whatever should have any hostile tendency.²⁰ It would seem, from this conversation, that Stanley was no party to Hastings's alleged plans, if he really was pursuing them.

Any confederation between the ecclesiastical counsellors and the queen's friends, was not likely to bring immediate personal danger to Richard or Buckingham; but from the lay power, influence, and resolution of Hastings, it was a question of vital importance to them, whether this lord was uniting with their antagonists. Intrigues of this kind are always covered; as far as they can be, with impenetrable secrecy. The public eye could not see them; they would be too dangerous to be intrusted to any but those in the highest confidence; and could be only known to Richard by the treachery of some one of this description. Catesby is declared to have been in this situation, and to have thus acted;²¹ and it was on his information, and by his recommendation, that the subsequent measures that were pursued were at this crisis adopted.

That Richard loved Hastings, and was loth to lose him from his party, and therefore employed Catesby to attach him to it, is mentioned²² by More. He also states, that Hastings expressed to Catesby the mistrust which others began to have of Richard; and that Catesby advised the protector to get rid of Hastings.²³ It was the interest of Catesby to please both this lord, and also Gloucester. He was a lawyer, who, by the special favor of Hastings, had risen to good authority; and he possessed much rule in

²⁰ More, 199.

²¹ Ib.

²² Ib. 200.

²³ Ib.

Leicestershire, where this nobleman's power chiefly lay.²⁴ On the 14th of May, he had been appointed, under the protector's patronage, to the chancellorship of the marches of Wales;²⁵ and on the 21st of May, was directed to execute all such commands, concerning this office, as Buckingham should direct.²⁶ It is clear that his communications, whatever they were, of Hastings's purposes, decided the protector and Buckingham to destroy this peer. More intimates, that these were, the expressed aversion of Hastings to Richard's taking the crown;²⁷ but this could not have swayed Buckingham on this occasion; for the same writer also declares, that they who knew the protector, denied that he had ever opened to Buckingham his enterprise of seizing the crown, till after he had secured the person of the duke of York.²⁸ But this last incident did not occur until the 16th of June,²⁹ the Monday after the arrest of Hastings; and therefore, on this representation, it was not the refusal of Hastings to let Gloucester be made king, that induced Buckingham to concur in his destruction.

The interest which Hastings had, at this time, to join the party of the queen, has not been taken into due consideration. The experience of six weeks, and more especially the grants to Buckingham, Howard, and Lovel,³⁰ proved, that this duke, and others, stood higher in Richard's favor, and was deriving from it larger benefits than himself. No grants were made to him under Gloucester: he would, therefore, be subordinate to Buckingham; but with the queen's party, he would be the principal minister.

CHAP.
VII.REIGN OF
EDW. V.²⁴ More, 199.²⁷ More, 200.²⁸ Ib 195.²⁵ Herl. MSS. p. 6. 12.²⁹ Croyland, 566.²⁶ Ib.³⁰ See before, p. 402.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

But there is also a circumstance to be noticed, which, in addition to the preferments given to Buckingham, may have alienated the mind of Hastings from the protector. His chief courtly dignity under Edward IV. was that of lord chamberlain. But in the letters of the 8th and 10th of June, Richard is styled, “great chamberlain.”¹⁰¹ This would seem to imply, that instead of Hastings being continued in this high confidential office to Edward v. Gloucester was himself appointed to it. The loss of this dignity may have combined, with Buckingham’s superior favor, to incline Hastings to unite himself with the party of the queen; and he may have been forming a plan with the other lords, in that interest, to dispossess Richard of the protectorate, when the coronation was completed. That the minds of the great were in a very unsettled and undecided state at this time, is strongly stated to us.¹⁰²

Beyond these circumstances, we cannot extend our authorized conjectures on the dark and violent transaction which is next to be recorded. On Tuesday the 10th of May, Richard wrote the agitated letter to York, and on the 11th to lord Neville, as already noticed; and on Friday morning, the 13th, his mind had fully implicated Hastings in the conspiracy which he imputed to this nobleman; and avenged itself upon him, in the manner which sir Thomas More, from the information of the protector’s enemies, thus details.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ The words are, ‘The duke of Gloucester, brother and uncle of kings, protectour and defensour, grett chamberleyne, constable, and lord high admirall of England.’ Drake, Ebor. 115.

¹⁰² ‘For the state of things, and the disposition of men were then such, that a man could not well tell whom he might trust, or whom he might fear.’ More, 196.

¹⁰³ More has left a blank for the day of the month, but gives the day of the week, ‘Friday.’ Croyland supplies us with the day of the month,

On the 13th of June, many lords assembled in council, at the Tower, to conclude upon all that was necessary for the coronation. About nine the protector entered courteously; and saying, he had played the sluggard that morning, desired the bishop of Ely to let him have some strawberries from his garden, in Holborn, for his dinner; and after a short attention, took his leave, and departed.

CHAP.
VII.REIGN OF
EDW. V.

A little more than an hour afterwards, he came back to them, with an angry countenance, knitting his brow, and frowning and biting his lips; so that the council were amazed at the sudden change. He sat down, and was for some time silent; but then suddenly asked, what punishment they deserved who were plotting his death. The council, startled, returned no answer; but Hastings declared, they should be punished as traitors. The protector then said, "That sorceress, my brother's wife, and another with her;" and then complained, that she and Shore's wife had, by their witchcraft, wasted his body; unbuttoning his left sleeve, and shewing them that arm, withered and small. The council, knowing that the arm had never been otherwise, supposed now that he meant to quarrel with them. Hastings, who was keeping Jane Shore, replied, that "If they had done so heinously, they were worthy of heinous punishment." The protector exclaimed, "Dost thou serve me with ifs and ands? I tell thee they have done it; and that I will make good on thy body—traitor!"

Then striking the council table hard with his fist,

"13th June," p. 566, which in that year was on a Friday. Polydore Virgil distinguishes with apparent accuracy, that Richard caused his chancellor, and others of the council, to meet at the same time at Westminster, to deliberate on the coronation; while he convened the prelates of York and Ely, Buckingham, Hastings, Stanley, Howard, and a few more, to the Tower, 543.

BOOK IV. one without cried “Treason!” and several men in armor rushed into the room. On their entrance, Richard arrested Hastings as a traitor; and had also Stanley, the archbishop of York, and the bishop of Ely, with some others, seized. A blow was made at Stanley in the bustle, with a pole-axe, which he partly avoided by sinking under the table, but it wounded his head. While the others were imprisoned in different places in the Tower, Hastings was ordered to confess and prepare for death, as Richard had sworn not to dine till his head was off. It was in vain he complained of severity, or demanded justice. The protector’s oath must not be broken. He was forced to take the nearest priest, and make a short confession; was hurried to the green by the Tower chapel; was laid upon a log of timber, provided for repairing it, and was there beheaded.¹⁰⁴

It is obvious, that this account gives the scene of the catastrophe, and not its causes. These were, according to More, but a part of Richard’s long-meditated design of usurping the crown, and his resentment at the refusal of Hastings to assist it. But Richard’s assertion of his own motives is, that Hastings had intended,¹⁰⁵ on that day, to have perpetrated

¹⁰⁴ That in this violence towards Hastings the protector acted in conjunction with the advice of other noblemen, may be inferred from the words of the son of one of ‘the priviest of Richard’s council,’ the duke of Norfolk. This young nobleman went to bring Hastings to that council: as they went together, they met an ecclesiastic, and Hastings stopping to converse with him, this conductor expressed his wonder that he talked so long with a priest, as he had no occasion for one ‘as yet.’ More thinks, these two words ought to have raised some suspicion. They certainly look like a previous knowledge of the intended violence, and a voluntary co-operation to produce it.

¹⁰⁵ That Hastings had then some great and secret design in agitation, seems the natural inference from his own expressions to his namesake, whom he met that morning on Tower Wharf. The pursuivant being reminded by him, that they had met there when Hastings had been arrested in Edward’s life, upon his differences with Rivers, answered, ‘They got

on him the violence which he had been made to undergo. How the truth on these deplorable actions really stood between these two great men, the heads of their respective factions, no modern historian can decide. All that can be justly done to either, is to bring, as we have attempted, all the facts that can be now elicited, and the most natural probabilities which they suggest, on both sides, to the reader's consideration. Every moral reasoner must deduce his own conclusion from these imperfect premises.¹⁰⁵

Immediately after dinner, Richard sent for the principal citizens, and, with Buckingham, appeared in rusty armor, taken, as if suddenly, from the Tower; asserted to them, that Hastings and others had formed the treasonable intention of destroying him and Buckingham that day in the council: that he himself had not acquired knowledge of the fact till ten o'clock that morning; that he had scarcely time to put on, for his preservation, such harness as came to hand; and desired them to report to the people these true circumstances of the case.¹⁰⁶ A proclamation was immediately issued, alleging, that Hastings had conspired, with others, to have killed the protector and Buckingham, sitting in the council; and to have taken upon them to rule the king and realm, at their

no good, nor you none harm thereby.' The reply of Hastings was, 'Thou wouldest say so, if thou knewest as much as I know, which few know else as yet, and more shall shortly.' More applies this to mean, that Rivers and Grey were that day to be beheaded at Pomfret. p. 207. But this cannot be, because we find by the date of his will, that Rivers was alive above ten days afterwards.

¹⁰⁵ Hastings, by his will, made about a year before his death, ordered one thousand priests to say one thousand placebos and dirigies, and one thousand masses for his soul, and that each should have sixpence. Dugd. Baron. 1. p. 585. Such were the opinions of the day, of the efficacy of these ceremonies; and so inventive was the mind, in the mode of varying their performance. Hastings is said to have been one of those who struck prince Edward at Tewkesbury. Pol. Virg. 543. But it is not certain that this occurred. ¹⁰⁶ More, 208.

BOOK
IV.REIGN OF
EDW. V.

pleasure.¹⁰⁷ That this official document should have been so neatly composed, fairly written, and completely published, within two hours after the death of Hastings, led most to believe, it must have been prepared before his death.¹⁰⁸ Jane Shore was then arrested on the charge of participating in the conspiracy. She was taken to prison; her valuable goods were confiscated; and she was consigned to the bishop of London, to be punished, not for her alleged treason, but for her notorious unchastity. She was sentenced to penance; and on the next Sunday, with a wax taper in her hands, clothed only in her kirtle, she walked before the cross, in a penitential procession. The populace was subdued by her modest air, and decorous conduct.¹⁰⁹ She was still very beautiful; and the shame of her exposure diffusing over her cheeks the bloom she had lost, she appeared but the more lovely for her disgrace. She survived to be reduced at last to a miserable poverty,

¹⁰⁷ More, 209. It charged him also with misleading the king into his injurious debaucheries; and, with his subsequent attachment to Jane Shore. It declared, that he had been put to death by the king's faithful council; and intimated, that the suddenness of the execution was to prevent his friends from making some great commotion for his deliverance. Ib.

¹⁰⁸ More has preserved two of the popular remarks. A schoolmaster printed in rhyme,

'Here is a gay goodly cast,
Foul cast away for haste.'

A merchant answered, that it was written by prophecy. More, 210.

¹⁰⁹ More, 211. If Hastings had really joined the queen against Gloucester, Jane Shore may have been an assisting instrument to produce the coalition. Her affection to Edward's family was great; and his death removed the queen's personal objection to her, when the need of a reconciliation with Hastings arose. The protector's charge against her was a confederation with the queen; tho the popular idea of witchcraft was used in the accusation. This was, probably, but an adoption of the public talk, that she had bewitched the king, and was now bewitching Hastings. She certainly had beauty's power of personal witchery; for she afterwards attached the marquis of Dorset, and, when he fled, even Richard's solicitor-general.

and even to ugliness, in her old age.¹¹⁰ That she died, from Richard's cruel prohibition against any one relieving her, of famine and fatigue, in Shoreditch, seems therefore to be but a traditional fiction. If this story contain any truth, it must relate to her final death in the day of her deereputude; and this must have occurred under Henry VIII. More's expressions of the miserable poverty of her old age, are not inconsistent with the popular tale of her place and mode of expiring; but these sufferings cannot have been inflicted by Richard.¹¹¹

CHAP.
VII.REIGN OF
EDW. V.

The arm of violence having been thus put into action, continued its illegal exertions without any public trial. The two prelates were sent off to two castles

¹¹⁰ More adds a brief history of her life, and gives it this conclusion:—
'Now she is old, lean, withered, and dried up; nothing left but shrivelled skin and hard bone.' They who knew her in her youth, declared 'she was proper and fair; nothing in her body that you would have wished to have changed, unless you would have wished her somewhat higher.' 'Albeit, some who now see her, for yet she liveth, deem her never to have been well visaged.' p. 212. She used her influence with Edward, to obtain many acts of kindness and mercy to others. Ib. 213. She died 18 Henry VIII.

¹¹¹ Hollingshed. There is a curious letter of Richard, after his becoming king, to his chancellor, stating, that his solicitor-general, Thomas Lynom, 'marveilously blynched and abused with the late wylfe of William Shore, nowe being in Ludgate, hath made contract of matrimony with her;' and that he 'entendeth to our ful gret merveile, to procede to the effect of the same.' He adds, 'We, for many causes, wold be sory that bee so shuld be disposed. Pray you, therefore, to sende for him, and, in that ye goodly may, exhorte and styre hym to the contrary.' Richard goes on to tell the bishop, 'If ye finde him utterly set for to marye hur, and noon otherwise wol be advertised; then, if it may stand with the lawe of the church, wee be content the tyme of marnage deferred to our comyng next to London; that, upon sufficient suretie founde of hure good bearing, ye doo sende for hure, and discharge hym of our sayd commaundment, committing hur to the rule and *guyding* of *her* father, or any other by your discretion, in the meane season.' Harl. MSS. 433. This document displays Richard acting, not with tyranny, but with great moderation, towards one whom he deemed so much his enemy. He desires his solicitor to be reasoned with against the marriage; but, if he persist in it, he only desires that it be deferred till his own arrival in London; that Jane might give sufficient security for her good conduct, and be in the time committed to her father's care.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

in Wales.¹¹² In one of these, at Brecon, under the command of Buckingham as its constable, Morton was confined; an important designation, remarkable for its result. Richard chose its locality and its lord, as the most secure mode of imprisoning Morton; and this selection proved one of the immediate causes of his final overthrow. Stanley was soon released and promoted, and trusted by Richard.¹¹³ That he had some intimation of the impending danger, tho he chose to convey the caution to Hastings as a dream, seems inferrible from that communication.¹¹⁴

On the Monday after this, or the 16th day of June, Richard went at the head of a large force, with swords and clubs, and compelled the archbishop of Canterbury, and others, to enter the sanctuary, and to solicit the queen to let the duke of York go to the Tower for the comfort of the king.¹¹⁵ It is at this time we must place that conversation with her, which More has amplified with such flowing, and yet perhaps not altogether improbable rhetoric; and which ended with her parting with the princely boy.¹¹⁶ He

¹¹² Hist. Croyl. 566.

¹¹³ See the grant to him in the Harl. MSS. 433.

¹¹⁴ Stanley sent his chamberlain to Hastings, on the preceding midnight, to say, that in a dream, he had seen a wild boar wounding himself and Hastings. He advised, that they should take their horses, and fly to their friends. More, 264. The boar was Richard's crest. It must have been something more than a dream, which suggested, that two such men should suddenly quit the metropolis, and begin a civil war. Hastings treated the admonition of a dream, with derision; but if he had planned his own measures, as Richard alleged, he would equally disregard the advice. This message, as Hastings probably joked with Stanley about it when they met, may have produced the blow at Stanley's head.

¹¹⁵ It is of importance to mark the specific date, which the Croyland doctor attaches to this incident, p. 566; because More, by erroneously placing it before the arrest of Hastings, p. 174, as he also wrongly places the day of Rivers's death, confuses his history, and thereby aggravates, untruly, the facts against Richard.

¹¹⁶ More has given twenty-one pages to it, p. 174-195.

was conducted by the cardinal to the king at the Tower.¹¹⁷

CHAP.
VII.REIGN OF
EDW. V.

While these events were transacting in London, sir Richard Ratcliffe, on the 15th of June, had reached York with Richard's earnest letter of the 10th, soliciting their aid. The corporation ordered all the forces that could be assembled to meet at Pomfret, on the 18th, where the earl of Northumberland was waiting to conduct them to London. On the 19th a proclamation was issued at York, in the protector's name, probably in consequence of fresh orders from London, after the catastrophe of Hastings, commanding all manner of men, in their best defensible array, to rise up incontinently, and come to London, to his highness, in company of the earl;¹¹⁸ again charging the queen, and her adherents, with projecting the destruction of him and his noble friends.

That on the 16th of June, it had been determined by Richard, and the noblemen who formed his council, that he should be crowned instead of Edward, there can be no doubt. The seizure of the little prince of York, on that day, sufficiently proves it; and the concurrence and efforts of the cardinal, and his attendant prelates, and of all the council, to procure the queen to deliver him up, as satisfactorily shew that they were then assenting to this revolutionary violence. This measure, after the arrest of Hastings, could leave no doubt on the subject.

¹¹⁷ Croyl. 566. More, 195.

¹¹⁸ The proclamation stated, ' And the lord Nevyle, and odyr men of worship; there to aid and assist him to the subdeweing, correcting, and punishing the queene, her blode, and odyr hyr adherentes, whilk hath intended, and dayly doth intend, to murther and utterly destroy his royal person, his cosyn the duke of Buckingham, and odyr of old royal blode of this realm, as alsoe the nobilmen of their companys.' Drake's Eborac. 115.

BOOK IV. More declares, that all the council affirmed, that Richard's motion, to take York from the queen, and put him in the Tower, was "good and reasonable;"¹¹⁹ that the archbishop of York took upon him to move her to it;¹²⁰ that divers of the clergy were then present at that approving council;¹²¹ that the temporal members of it wholly, and good part of the spiritual, also agreed, that if the young child were not willingly delivered, he should be fetched out of the sanctuary,¹²² but that the lord cardinal should first essay to get him with the queen's good will; and that the cardinal, with divers other lords with him,¹²³ went and urged her to give him up. This dignified ecclesiastic told her, what he must have known to be untrue, that the child being with his mother, was an insupportable grief and displeasure to the king;¹²⁴ tho' it was palpable to all, that the king would, at that time, have eagerly preferred being also with his parent. When the queen averred her doubt of his safety, if taken from her, and steadily refused to surrender him, the cardinal degraded himself by expressing a threat, that upon her further opposition, he would depart from the business, and leave it to *others* to shift with it; and by pledging his own body and soul to the child's safety;¹²⁵ a pledge that we must call a wilful delusion, because it was in opposition to the manifest peril of the case, unless he had kept him in his own palace; and because, after the sudden violence to Hastings, it was clear, that when the prince was once in the Tower, no prelate had the power to hinder Richard doing whatever he should resolve on. It was then that the queen, seeing no friend able or

¹¹⁹ More, 176.
¹²⁰ Ib. 184.

¹²¹ Ib. 177.
¹²² Ib. 184.

¹²³ Ib. 183.
¹²⁴ Ib. 192.

willing to help, unwillingly surrendered her child, whom the same cardinal took and lodged in the Tower.¹²⁶

CHAP.
VII.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

The most probable inference from these facts is, that Richard proceeded to the usurpation of the crown, with the approbation of most of the great men, both of the church and state, then in London. What motives determined them to this assent, we cannot now ascertain. But the terror of military force was not one of these; for Richard's army from the north was not ordered to be at Pomfret till the 18th of June, and did not, in fact, leave that city till after the execution of Rivers, and therefore not till after the 23d of June;¹²⁷ and could not be in the metropolis till the end of the month, several days after Richard had seated himself on the throne. Not that the assent of the whole country could be any justification of the treasonable and immoral action; but the preceding facts prove, that the protector, however bad or blameable, was no worse than the most distinguished men of rank at that day. All who hoped to profit by it supported him; and the same interested motives would have made them as readily put him down by the same means, if his competitors had anticipated him. This is probably the real truth of the case. Both parties were playing the same game of unprincipled violence; and Richard was the most fearless, prompt, determined, and unshrinking.

The mode adopted by the protector and his council, to announce his intended usurpation to the public,

¹²⁶ Croyl. 566. The queen at parting, said unto her child, ' Farewell, my own sweet son; God send you good keeping: Let me kiss you once yet, ere you go; for God knoweth when we shall kiss together again.' And therewith she kissed him, and blessed him; turned her back, and wept and went away, leaving the child weeping as fast.' More, 194.

¹²⁷ See the date of his will, hereafter mentioned.

BOOK IV. was as singular as the reason on which he chose to rest it.

REIGN OF EDW. V. On the Sunday after the possession of the duke of York, which would be the 22d of June, Dr. Shaw, brother of the lord mayor, preached a sermon at St. Paul's cross, in which it was planned, that he should impeach the legitimacy of the young king, and introduce a panegyric on Richard, so exactly timed, as to be uttering while the protector entered. To the destruction of its theatrical effect, it was expressed, but Richard was not at hand to appear. He had been delayed; and the preacher was absurd enough to repeat the personal allusion verbatim, when he really came. The obvious concert of the artifice defeated its expected result; and the public indignation was excited against a man, who could profane a place and office so sacred, for purposes so base.¹²⁸

On the Tuesday following, the 24th, the duke of Buckingham attended the meeting of the common council; and employed all his eloquence to persuade his audience to an acclamation, that Richard should be king; but the act was too treasonable, and the real sympathy too strong for Edward, to gain more than a few rabble voices for such a proposition.¹²⁹

The scheme for making the young king's deposition a sort of popular act, having failed, Buckingham,

¹²⁸ More, 226, 7. That the preacher attacked the chastity of the protector's mother, to put the late king's legitimacy in doubt, is scarcely credible, because it was unnecessary; and if this were done, it did not originate with Richard. It was one of the articles of Clarence's attainder, that he accused his brother, Edward IV. of being a bastard. Rolls Parl. 6. p. 194. Polydore Virgil describes the sermon as representing Richard to be like his father the duke of York, in two points, being a small man, with a short and compact face. p. 545. Dr. Shaw lived but a short time afterwards. He was of the Augustine friars, and had borne a great reputation.

¹²⁹ More details this scene and the duke's speech, p. 228-38.

on the next day, accompanied by the mayor, aldermen, and chief commoners, and by several noblemen, knights, and other gentlemen, went to Richard, at his house, and formally solicited him to become their king. He made some difficulties, which enabled Buckingham to display more of his rhetoric, and Richard to seem to have the honor thrust upon him:¹³⁰ and this scene having been well acted, Richard prepared, with the decisive boldness of his spirit, to take the throne, without further coquetry or hesitation. The parliament had been summoned for the 25th of June.¹³¹ When the members met, tho' not in due form, a roll was presented to them, as a bill, claiming the crown for Richard; and stating the grounds of the application.¹³²

He seems to have rested it on the ancient canon law of pre-contracts.¹³³ The bill stated, that before Edward's private marriage with lady Grey, he stood plighted to dame Eleanor Butteler, daughter of the old earl of Shrewsbury, with whom he made a pre-contract of matrimony, long before his nuptials with the present queen; and therefore, that his issue were illegitimate: and that the line of Clarence being attainted, Richard was become his father's heir.¹³⁴ It

¹³⁰ More, 238-240.

¹³¹ See before, p. 387 (note 36.)

¹³² See it at length in the Parl. Rolls, v. 6. p. 240-3.

¹³³ By the ancient canon law, a contract for marriage might be valid and perfect without the church ceremony. See Gibson's Codex, Tit. 22. Hence there have been decisions in the ecclesiastical courts, by which second marriages have been annulled, on account of the existence of a pre-contract; and see the Decret. L. 4. Tit. 1. c. 21. It was the subsequent statute of 32 Henry VIII. c. 38. which, reciting the fact that marriages had been annulled, by reason of pre-existing contracts, enacted, that all such marriages should be held good notwithstanding such contracts. So that Richard was right in the law of his objection. Buckingham told Morton, that Richard brought in 'instruments, authentic doctors, proctors, and notaries of the law, with depositions of divers witnesses,' to prove the young king's illegitimacy. Graft. 815.

¹³⁴ More, 241. It also stated the protector's great wit, prudence,

BOOK
IV.

REIGN OF
EDW. V.

prayed him to accept and take upon him the crown and royal dignity.¹³⁵

He took possession of the throne on the following day, the 26th of June; ¹³⁶ having issued a previous proclamation, ordering every man to be in his lodging by ten o'clock at night; and that none, but those licensed, should bear any manner of weapon, on pain of imprisonment.¹³⁷ He described the popularity of his assumption of the crown, in an official letter to lord Mountjoy at Calais.¹³⁸

The path of bloodshed and injustice being once chosen, more blood and crime necessarily followed. The death of Rivers and Grey now became essential to the plans of the protector and his friends. Rivers was, on the 23d of June, at Sheriffs Hutton castle, and there made his will,¹³⁹ as uncertain of life, but

justice, princely courage, and memorable and laudable acts in divers battles. Ib. Stillington, the bishop of Bath, who was present at the pre-contract of lady Butler, is said to have given Richard information of this formidable difficulty. Comines declares, that he heard this prelate say, that he had married Edward to her. c. 112. 122.

¹³⁵ The act, which in the next parliament made this bill an act, states that it was presented ‘by many and divers lords spiritual and temporal, and other nobles and notable persons of the commons, in great multitude.’ p. 240. From which I should infer, that the parliament was summoned, but that it was not opened in due form; Richard not chusing to do it as protector, because he meant to be kin; and for the same reason determining that Edward should not meet it.

¹³⁶ Croyl. 567.

¹³⁷ Harl. MSS. № 433. p. 239.

¹³⁸ This states, that the king, ‘notably assisted by well near all the lords spiritual and temporal of this royaume, went the same day unto his palace of Westminster; and thence in such royal, honorable and appareld way in the great hall, there took possession, and declared his mind, that the same day he would begin to reign upon his people; and from thence rode solemnly to the cathedral church of Londou, and was received there with procession, and with great congratulations and acclamation, of all the people in every place, by the way that the king was in that day.’ Harl. MSS. Ib. More’s account in p. 244.

¹³⁹ This is dated 23 June 1483, at Hutton castle. He bequeaths his heart to be carried to Our Lady at Pisa, to be buried: and he directs, *in case he should die south of Trent*, to be also buried there. He orders all his apparel for his body, and horse harness, to be sold, and from the produce, shirts and smocks to be given to the poor. Dug. Baron . 2. p. 233.

not as then immediately expecting death. He was removed after that day to Pomfret, where he was arraigned and tried, before the earl of Northumberland, on the charge of conspiring Richard's death.¹⁴⁰ He was declared to be guilty, and adjudged to death. In this state, he wrote a poetical effusion, which has been handed down to us;¹⁴¹ and was, with Grey and

CHAP.
VII.
REIGN OF
EDW. V.

¹⁴⁰ Rous, 214, 5. That Northumberland was at Pomfret, we perceive from the York registers already quoted; and that he was the principal judge of Rivers, we learn from Rous, who says, of all the queen's friends, 'conspiratum est contra eos quod ipsi contrivissent mortem ducis, protectoris Angliae.' Ib. 213.

¹⁴¹ Rous has preserved this 'balet,' which we subjoin, as shewing this nobleman's calm, pensive, and cultivated mind:—

Sumwhat musyng,
and more mornynge,
In remembryng
The unstydfastnesse;
This worl being
Of such whelyng
Thus contrarieng
What unny I gesse?
I fere, dowties
reinedeless;
Is nowe to seie my woful chauhce.
Lo! in this traunce;
Now in substance:
Such is my dawnce.

Wyllng to die,
Me thynkys truly,
Bownden am I
and that gretely
To be content.
Seyng plainly,
That fortune doth wry,
All contrary
From myn entent.
My lyff was lent,
Me to one entent,
Hytt is ny spent.
Welcome, fortune!
But I ne went (thought)
Thus to be shent (killed)
But so hit ment.
Such is her won.

Rous, Hist. 214.

BOOK IV. Vaughan, beheaded at Pomfret.¹⁴² This was the second blood¹⁴³ shed by the protector and his friends.

REIGN OF EDW. V. But by the earl of Northumberland presiding and sanctioning it, the guilt of it cannot be laid to Richard alone.

Five thousand ill-provided troops now came up from the north, Wales, and other parts;¹⁴⁴ and Richard proceeded fearlessly to his coronation. Thus far it seems, that all which he had done, was aided, approved, and sanctioned by the great men, both temporal and spiritual, about him. His determined spirit, inflamed with ambition, and fond of the pomp of state, executed unshrinkingly whatever atrocity they recommended, or that appeared to him to be necessary to the accomplishment of their councils, and his designs.

Thus ended the short reign of Edward V. Two months and eighteen days comprised the brief duration of his royalty. We cannot now ascertain the extent of the popular approbation that accompanied his deposition. The promiscuous multitude shout at the showy pomp which pleases their momentary gaze, without befriending the circumstances that cause it. Both Richard's anxiety and self-flattery would

¹⁴² His body was found to have an hair shirt under his clothes; which was afterwards hung before St. Mary's image at Doncaster. Rous, 214. The aged sir Thomas Vaughan exclaimed on the scaffold, 'I appeal to the high tribunal of God, against the duke of Gloucester, for this wrongful murder, and our real ianocence.' Ratcliffe, with a sneering insensibility that does no credit to the gentry of the day, remarked, ' You have made a goodly appeal. Lay down your head.' The knight replied, ' I die in the right; take heed you die not in the wrong,' and submitted to the blow.

¹⁴³ Croyl. 567. Polyd. Virgil correctly places this execution at this time, 546.

¹⁴⁴ Croyl. 567. Pol. Virg. 546. They 'came up evil appelleled, and worse harnessed, in rusty harness, neither defensible nor scoured, which mustered in Finsbury Field, to the great disdain of all lookers on.' Hall, p. 375.

desire to construe the applause of the voice into the favor of the heart ; but the condemning fact, that he had governed in his nephew's name, and taken and given oaths of allegiance to him, and appointed his coronation, without impeaching his legitimacy, could leave no one ignorant, that the imputations were but a pretext ; and that his usurpation was a daring violation of all legal right and moral justice, as well as of impartial reason and conscientious religion. It stood on no grounds but that of oppressing power, fancied expediency, selfish gratification, and a supposed necessity of self-defence. Hence, his throne stood merely on the narrow foundation of self-interest ; and tho, from soon feeling this, he became lavish of gifts and honors, till he impoverished his own resources, he found the mercenary basis too weak to uphold him ; and he vanished with the same rapidity with which he had burst into his transitory blaze.

CHAP.
VII.REIGN OF
EDW. V.

C H A P. VIII.

REIGN OF RICHARD THE THIRD.

1483—1485.

BOOK IV. **W**HEN Richard thus ascended his nephew's throne, he was but thirty years of age.¹ It was an easy measure, at that moment, with so many assisting friends, to step into the royal chair; and as the dangerous consequences of such an usurpation seemed to him, and them, of less magnitude than the reign of Edward V. might have produced, the immorality of the action was disregarded, and the perils that might evolve from it were dared. He relied upon his own judgment and activity for surmounting these; and he prepared to enjoy the regal splendor he loved, in its fullest blaze.

One of his first objects was, to secure the important fortresses of Calais and Guynes, and their well-disciplined garrisons. These, like the great nobility

¹ He was born at Foderingay, on 2d October 1452. W. Wyr. 477. Hence, on 26th June 1483, he was thirty years, eight months, and twenty-four days old. Shakspear, with correct judgment, did not place the death of Henry VI. in his tragedy of Richard III. Yet, by opening it with Henry's funeral, he, as Cibber afterwards, has confused the chronology. When Henry VI. was buried, Richard was but nineteen. He did not, at that funeral, court or see lady Anne, nor marry her till a considerable time afterwards. At Edward the Fifth's accession he was thirty; and not thirty-three years of age when he fell against Richmond. So that to personate the real historical character, the actor, as the play now stands, should be of the inconsistent ages of nineteen, thirty, and thirty-three, during the representation, instead of the elderly ruffian whom we usually see. It may be also noticed, that the old duchess of York, his mother, was at this time a Benedictine nun. See before.

and gentry, before the deposition of Edward had been resolved upon, had sworn to him their oath of allegiance. It was for Richard, on the unexpected revolution he had made, to persuade them that they might violate this solemn pledge of loyalty to their natural, admitted, and living sovereign, and transfer it to himself.

CHAP.
VIII.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

To this end, on the 28th of June, he sent instructions to lord Mountjoy, at Calais, desiring him to insinuate to his troops, that when they took that oath, they were ignorant of the “verray sure and true title” which Richard then had to the crown; that upon the knowlege of this, every good true Englishman is bound to depart from his first oath, so ignorantly given to him, to whom it did not appertain; and therefore that they should make their oath anew to him, whom good law, reason, and concordant assent of the lords and commons, had ordered to reign over the people.² To sir Ralph Hastings, at the castle of Guynes, he sent four persons, to whom he desired the lieutenant to give full faith and credence, in such things and news as he had commanded them to explain; and he prayed sir Ralph to disclose them to such of the subjects under his rule, as by his wisdom should be thought most accordant.³

From policy, from love of public applause, or from a desire to discharge with credit the full duties of a sovereign, or from a blending of all these motives, he endeavored immediately to acquire and deserve popularity. In imitation of an ancient sovereign, he went himself to the court of king's bench, “because he considered, that it was the chiefest duty of a king

² See the instructions in Harl. MSS. N° 433, p. 239.³ See the letter, MSS. ib.

BOOK IV. to administer the laws."⁴ He went about with pleasing speeches, "to win to him the nobles, the merchants, the artificers, and all kind of men, especially the lawyers of the realm."⁵ And in order that no man should hate him for fear, and that his clemency might procure for him the good will of the people, he made another proclamation, That he had put out of his mind all enmities; and he declared, that by this official instrument, he openly pardoned all offences which had been committed against him.⁶ As an indication of the fulness of the application of this forgiveness, and of the sincerity of his feeling, he sent for one Fogge, then taking shelter in a sanctuary, and towards whom he was known to have had a deadly hatred; and in the sight of all the people, he took him graciously by the hand.⁷

If it is allowed to have been afterwards noble in Charles, when he became king, to have declared, that he forgot the injuries of the duke of Orleans, Richard may claim some credit for this similar example of a prior magnanimity. The author who has recorded it, speaks the language of his prepossessions, in calling it a "*deceitful*" clemency. But as there is no intimation given, that the king ever violated this remitting promise, as to all past hostilities against him, the wise generosity of the action ought not to be depreciated. His subsequent severities were directed against subsequent attacks.

⁴ More, p. 244.

⁵ Ib.

⁶ Ib.

⁷ Ib. 245. Grafton, 798. The sincerity and permanence of Richard's forgiveness, and his readiness and courage in trusting his enemies again, is evidenced, not only by his giving an official pardon afterwards, under his sign manual, to this person, who was sir John Fogge; but by making him a friendly grant of some manors in the ensuing February. Harl. MSS. p. 98. This man afterwards joined his enemies.

As he returned to his palace, he saluted whomsoever he met⁸. This is also branded as the servile flattery of a guilty mind ; but it is not the interest of the public at large to discourage royal condescensions. Every act of kindness from the throne, which unites the hearts of the sovereign and his people, strengthens the kingly power; and increases both the happiness and the prosperity of the nation. Proud dignity weakens its own stability, and diminishes its own comfort ; and awakens evil feelings at every step of its arrogance. Courteous majesty is always the most honored. It is a perpetual compliment to its admiring subjects.

Two days before his coronation, he went in great state by water to the Tower, where his dethroned nephew was residing ; and made several peers, and seventeen knights of the Bath.⁹ He released Stanley and the archbishop of York ; and appointed the former his lord high steward.¹⁰ As the soldier's blow at Stanley, on the arrest of Hastings, and the earl's subsequent imprisonment, were incidents calculated to plant in Stanley's bosom a mortal resentment against the king, it was an action of very liberal and rarely equalled magnanimity in Richard, to have placed such a nobleman in an office, so confidential in his household, and so near his council. That it was as unwise as it was generous, Stanley's future treachery proved. In this transaction the king had all the honor, the earl all the disgrace. A true nobleman would have declined the trust-imposing and truth-demanding honor ; or would have steadily fulfilled its moral and political obligations. If Richard advanced him, because he dreaded him or his son,

⁸ More, 245.⁹ Grafton names them in p. 799.¹⁰ Ib.

BOOK
IV.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

it does not lessen the greatness of the action. The king could have rewarded him with royal honors and emoluments, without making him so near a companion of his state and cabinet. It is clear, both from the concession and the acceptance of the appointment, that whatever may have been the hypocrisy of the king, it was exceeded by that of Stanley, who deceived even the suspicious jealousy of his lynx-eyed master, up to the last moments, in which he betrayed and ruined him.

Richard at the same time liberated Morton from the Tower; and committed him to Buckingham, to be kept in friendly restraint in the duke's Welsh castle.¹¹ It is a remarkable instance of human blindness to the consequences of its own actions, that, by this destination of the bishop, the king was laying the foundation for his own future destruction. The preservation of the prelate's life produced the loss of his own. But as Richard had betrayed his own trust, he was suffered to fall by the perfidy or ingratitude of others.

The next day, indulging his peculiar fondness for public state, he rode thro the city from the Tower to Westminster, in great pomp and ceremony. Buckingham rivalled his sovereign's taste for gorgeous show. Richly apparelled himself, he appeared upon a stately horse, whose sumptuous trappings of blue velvet were made to radiate dazzlingly with embroidered axles of burnished gold: and these were spread to the gazing multitude, by footmen, with such displaying management, "that all men much regarded them."¹²

¹¹ Grafton, p. 799.

¹² Grafton, 799-809. Hall, 375. Three dukes, nine earls, twenty-

His coronation was made as stately as wealth could provide, or pomp exhibit. Saluted by his prelates and chapel in Westminster hall, the procession of studied dignity passed thence to the abbey. The royal household, knights and peers, were followed by Northumberland, with the pointless sword of mercy ; and by Stanley, with his constable's mace. Kent bore the naked weapon of justice on the king's right hand ; and Lovel another on his left. The duke of Suffolk then appeared with the sceptre ; and Lincoln with the ball and cross. The new-made earl of Surrey carried the sword of state, in a rich scabbard ; near whom his father, Norfolk, displayed the glittering and tempting crown. Under a canopy, borne by the barons of the cinque ports, between two bishops, one of them the auxiliary Stillington, Richard, the prime actor, and theme of this happiest day of his short life, exhibited himself in a surcoat and robe of purple, with his train borne by the duke of Buckingham, with his wand of lord high steward. The queen's sceptre, and dove-crowned rod, succeeded the king, in the hands of Huntingdon and Lisle ; and, preceded by the earl of Wiltshire, with her crown, she came in gentle majesty, in robes like the king ; also between two prelates, and under a like supported canopy. On her head was a rich coronet of jewels and pearls. The countess of Richmond bore her train ; and a splendid retinue of duchesses, countesses, baronesses, and fair ladies, closed the magnificent scene.¹³ It is the natural inference, from the coronation roll, that Edward v. walked in this

C H A P.
VIII.REIGN OF
RICH. III.He is
crowned
6 July.

two lords, and seventy-eight knights (the last the lord mayor), formed part of the splendid procession. Grafton names them, 799, 800.

¹³ Grafton, 800-3. Hall, 375.

BOOK
IV.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

procession. It is certain from this, that robes were made for him to accompany it.¹⁴

They entered the abbey at its western portal, to their seat of state, heard the appointed anthems, descended to the high altar; and putting off their robes, were anointed in several parts. Assuming new garments of cloth of gold, they were crowned by the cardinal of Canterbury, assisted by other bishops. On each side of the king stood a duke; while Surrey upheld the sword of state before him. At the queen's right and left, a bishop was standing, and a lady knelt. The service performed, they both communicated, and returned with a repetition of the preceding state, to a splendid banquet, where all the accustomed ceremonial and luxury of marshalled state, with the theatrical champion, passed the hours till night.¹⁵ That Buckingham, beginning to be dissatisfied with Richard, pretended to be ill, to avoid attending this coronation, and that the king declared, that if he could not walk, he would cause him to be carried, is mentioned by More;¹⁶ but these tales are scarcely probable, unless we refer it to a personal pride, that would not stoop to be a public minister to

¹⁴ This entry, which lord Orford first brought to the public notice, is, 'To lord Edward, son of the late Edward the IV. for his apparel and array, that is to say, a short gowne, made of two yards and three quarters of crymsyn clothe of gold, lyned with 2 yards $\frac{1}{2}$ of blac velvet; a long gowne, made of vi yards $\frac{5}{6}$ of crymsyn cloth of gold, lyned with six yards of green damask; a shorte gowne, made of two yards $\frac{1}{2}$ of purpell velvet, lyned with two yards $\frac{1}{2}$ of green damask; a doublet, and a stomacher, made of two yards of blac satyn, &c.; besides two foot cloths, a bonet of purple velvet, nine horse harness, and nine saddle housings of blue velvet, gilt spurs, with many other rich articles, and magnificent apparel for his henchmen or pages.' Hist. Doubts, p. 66. Grafton had a narrative of the coronation before him when he wrote, p. 798. But he only particularizes the great men who had official honors, in the state pageantry. This may account for his not mentioning Edward in it, who, if there, would have walked only as one of the nobles.

¹⁵ Grafton, 800-3. Hull, 376.

¹⁶ More, p. 253.

another man's superior splendor. The duke's discontent is popularly alleged to have arisen from Richard's refusal to grant him the Hereford estate ; but both the refusal and the discontent seem to be disproved by the fact, that seven days after his coronation, Richard gave to Buckingham his letters patent, by which he willed and granted, that in the next parliament, the duke should be legally restored, from the preceding Easter, to all the manors, lordships and lands of the earl of Hereford, specified in the schedule.¹⁷ The crown could not make a fuller grant. It only wanted the parliamentary sanction. But More acknowledges, that those who were in the real secrets of that day denied these reports¹⁸ which we have noticed, in order to shew that they are unfounded.

Richard appears, from the time of his coronation, to have fixed his determined mind to enjoy his regal state as splendidly as he could display it ; to maintain his throne with unshrinking resolution ; to watch with alert and jealous vigilance all that criticised or opposed ; to act with the most prompt energy against every hostility that emerged ; to punish resistance with the most unsparing severity ; and to anticipate his enemies with the most rapid measures, and with the most fearless and unfeeling decision ; but wherever his own power was not endangered, nor due respect withheld, to behave with courtesy, liberality, condescension and friendship. His extreme love of power and state induced him to govern

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

¹⁷ The grant is in the Harl. MSS. 433, p. 107, 108 ; it styles Buckingham, his right trusty and entirely beloved cousin, and also heir of blood of Humphry Bohun, late earl of Hereford ; and mentions 'the true, faithful, and laudable service which our said cousin hath, in many sundry wise done to us, to our right singular will and pleasure.' Ib.

¹⁸ More, 254.

BOOK
IV.
REIGN OF
RICH. III.

too eagerly by his own mind and views ; and to dislike to be shackled by the power, or to be led by the interference of others. Some of these principles, by which he meant to have most firmly consolidated his throne, will be found to have greatly contributed to overthrow it. His intentions as to his deposed nephew, and the younger brother, were, so far as he disclosed them to Buckingham, to preserve their lives, and to maintain them in such an honorable state as would content the whole nation.¹⁹ That Edward's presence should have been a part of his coronation ceremony, is in unison with this declaration.

To exhibit his state to the eye of his early friends, in the northern counties, with ostentatious pageantry, as the Croyland doctor, who was then alive, and observing him, declares;²⁰ and to enjoy it in their admiration and applause ; and at the same time to overawe and tranquillize the disorderly and violent in those parts, as others intimate ;²¹ he resolved to make a progressive circuit through various counties of England to the north of the metropolis. He rewarded the rude army that had marched from beyond the Humber to support him ; and dismissed them to their homes.²² No incident could express greater reliance on the popularity of his conduct, or of his accession, than thus parting with his military auxiliaries, and committing himself, with only his retinue

¹⁹ Grafton, 815. Hall, 387. The duke also told Morton, that Richard assured him, and the lords, that he intended to keep the crown only till Edward V. should be twenty-four years of age, and were able to govern the realm, like a mature and sufficient king. Ib.

²⁰ Croyl. cont. 567. ‘Quam diligentissime poterat ostentare.’ Ib.

²¹ Hall, 376. Fabian also suggests, ‘to pacify that country, and to redresse certayne ryotes there lately dooen.’ p. 516.

²² Hall, 376. He sent the son and heir of his brother Clarence, to Sheriff Hutton's castle in Yorkshire, to have no danger from him. Pol. Virg. 546.

of state, to the feelings and unawed intercourse of the population of the country.

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

He began his tour of state though Reading, which he reached on the 23d of July.²³ At Oxford, the bishop Wainfleet received him and his queen,²⁴ with that ceremony and gratulation which this illustrious university is accustomed to display towards its sovereigns; and from thence he moved to Gloucester. Thus far Buckingham appears to have accompanied him; but, at this town, he parted from his friend, whom he had now made inferior only to himself in the kingdom. No visible diminution of their mutual attachment here occurred. They took leave of each other in “most loving and trusty manner;” and the duke went to Brecon, loaded “with great gifts and high behests!”²⁵

He passed on to Tewkesbury, the scene of his greatest martial exploit, when only nineteen, on the 4th of August;²⁶ and thence, turning southward, he reached Warwick before the 8th of that month.

Having sent to the powers abroad, official annunciation of his accession, he received their answers in the first part of his summer progress. The answer of Louis XI. the French king, who was soon after seized with those fits that ended his Machiavellian life, was civil, short, and cold.

“I have seen the letter you have written by your herald Blanc Sanglier, and thank you for the tidings you have communicated; and if I can do you any service, I will do it with a very good heart, for I

²³ Here he signed a warrant in favor of lady Hastings. Harl. MSS. p. 109.

²⁴ Wood Antiq. Ox. 1. p. 233. ²⁵ More, 254.

²⁶ He then gave the abbot of Tewkesbury 310*l.* out of the rents of his brother Clarence's estate. Harl. MSS. 110.

BOOK IV. wish much to have your friendship—adieu my dear cousin.”²⁷ Richard’s reply was as measured and laconic; as if he had felt that he had received only a slight compliment of verbal decorum. “ My dear cousin, I have seen the letters you sent me by the herald Buckingham, by which I understand, that you wish much to have my friendship. I am very well contented with this in good form and manner.”²⁸

The most wary politicians could hardly have been more frugal of phrase and feeling, than these two royal correspondents, on the most interesting occasion of regal life—the grandest incident of individual history; but Louis may have considered Richard’s elevation, rather as an assumption, than as a just accession.

The duke of Burgundy’s reception of his communication, was perhaps, from his political situation, more cordial;²⁹ and the king’s reply displayed a desire to convert his superior courtesy into a friendly feeling.³⁰ The greatest balm to Richard’s heart, at this time, must have been the kind notice of his

²⁷ The French letter is in Harl. MSS. p. 236. It is signed ‘Loys,’ and dated 21 July.

²⁸ Harl. MSS. p. 237. Louis died 30 August 1483. Comines declares he never knew any prince less faulty in the main; 1 p. 45; and that he had been obeyed by every one, as if all Europe had been created for no other end but to be commanded by him. Yet he gave his physician 10,000 crowns a month, that he might be interested to preserve his life. p. 80. No man was more fearful of death; he ordered his servants never to mention the word in his presence, p. 41. The same author describes his restless ambition, faithlessness, jealousies, personal misery; his tyrannical cages of wood and iron for prisoners; and his fortifying himself in a castle, with watch towers, and bowmen to lie in the ditches, from the dread of his nobility, whom he was continually abasing. 83-93.

²⁹ Harl. MSS. ib. It is dated Gand, 30 July.

³⁰ Richard’s answer is dated 20 August, at Nottingham castle; it begins, ‘ Monsieur mon cousin, je me recommande, a vous tous, qui je puis. J’ai receut par mon huissier Blanc Sanglier,’ your letter; and contains a familiar application to him, about buying some wines for him and his queen. Harl. MSS. p. 237.

equals. What is seized by violence, is held with a jealous sensibility, both to alarm and censure, that makes every soothing word or demeanor a sweet and welcome boon.

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

But the highest gratification which he could receive from the attention of foreign princes, he enjoyed at Warwick, on the 8th of August, from the ambassador of Isabella, the queen of Castile, who patronized Columbus; and who gave to Ferdinand of Arragon that additional sceptre, which enabled him to expel the Moors from Granada, and to make Spain one united Christian kingdom. We connect these circumstances with the recollection of her name, because the statement which she authorized her “*Orator Granfidus de Savola*,” to make, shew how greatly the course of European and American history, and therefore of the whole world, might have been changed, if Edward IV. instead of marrying hastily the widow Grey, had accepted of the hand of the important, and not unwilling Isabella.

The king assembled the lords of his council, and sat in royal state, at Warwick, to receive the acceptable envoy. The commissioned Spaniard in his public address, declared that his queen had been turned in her heart from England, in time past, for the unkindness which she had taken against Edward, for *his refusal of her*, and taking instead, to his wife, a widow of England. This cause had moved her against her nature, which had ever been to like and favor England, to take part with the French monarch; and to make leagues and confederations with him. But as the king was dead, who had shewed her this unkindness; and as the sovereign of France had broken four principal articles, that had been signed between him and Castile, she now wished to return to

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

her natural disposition towards the English realm.³¹ Savola then delivered a written proposal, that if Richard would make war upon Louis XI. to recover the ancient possessions of the crown of England in France, she would give to his armies and captains her maritime ports free and secure, and victuals and necessary arms, on just payment; and would, if need were, send knights, heroes and men, to co-operate.³² Isabella's own letter of credence to the king, was presented by her ambassador to him.³³ This recognition of his sovereignty and public solicitation of his exertions, in a popular war against France, was the most propitious and flattering circumstance that he could at this juncture receive. He referred the request to the consideration of his cabinet council.³⁴ He

³¹ Harl. MSS. p. 235.³² Ib.

³³ It is 'Muy esclarecido rey; muy caro et muy amado primo: Nos la reyna de Castilla, de Leon, de Arragon, de Sicilia, ffic. vos embiamos mucho saludas como a quel que mucho amamos et preciamos et para quien queruimos que Dois diese tanta vide salua et honra quanta vos mesmo desayb. Faceamos vos saber que nos enbiamos a vos al bachelier de Sasiola del nostro consilio et qual de nostre parte vos hablara algunas cosas; muy afectuosamente vos rogamos le dedere entere fee et creencia, muy esclarecido rey, nostro muy caro et muy amado primo. Dios nostro señor, todos tiempos vos aya en su protection et recomienda de la abeza de sancto Domingo de la calcada. ' Yo la Reyna '

6 June 1483.

' Al muy esclarecido rey de Ynglaterra, nostro muy caro et muy amada primo.'

This translation follows in the MS.

' Right excellent king; our right dear and right entirely beloved: We, the queen of Castile, Leon, Arragon, Sicily, &c. send you many greetings as to him that we greatly love and praise, and him to whom we beseech God to grant as much life, health, and honor, as yourself desires. We let you know that we send unto you the bachelior of Sasiola of our conseil, whioh on our behalf shall show you certain things, praying you of affectionate mind unto him, to give faith and credence, right excellent king, our right dear and intirely beloved. May our Lord God always have you in his protection and recommendation.'

To the right excellent king of England, our right dear and right intirely beloved.'

Harl. MSS. Ib. p. 236. Unless the Spanish government anticipated Richard's enthronement, or assimilated him to the king, in his protectorial capacity, this, from the date, must have been addressed to Edward V.; but it was delivered to Richard, as meant for him.

³⁴ Harl. MSS. 235. ' We send it to you, to the intent we may have

knighted the ambassador soon afterwards, at York; and wrote grateful letters to Ferdinand and Isabella, thanking them for their friendship and alliance.³⁵

He proceeded on his tour, and was at Coventry on the 15th of August. He there signed a memorandum for 180*l.* owing for the goods furnished to the lady Anne, his queen consort.³⁶ At Leicester, on the 17th of August, he ordered 2,000 Welsh bills to be made for him, in all haste possible; and authorized one of the ushers of his chamber, to take in any place where it should be found most expedient to him, as many smiths as he should think necessary for the accomplishment of his intent;³⁷ and two days afterwards he issued his summons, from the same town of Leicester, to several knights and gentlemen to attend at the castle of Pomfret, on the 27th of that month.³⁸ On the 22d of August we find him at Nottingham,³⁹ from which he answered Burgundy; and nine days afterwards, at York.⁴⁰

As the person of Richard was unquestionably short,⁴¹ tho' his face was handsome;⁴² and as his

your good advertisement what is further to be done in this matter.' This was the 9th August. Rymer has printed the ratification of the treaty, dated Aug. 31. v. 12. p. 197.

³⁵ Rym. Fed. 12. p. 200, 1. Comines.

³⁶ Harl. MSS. 109. ³⁷ Ib. p. 110.

³⁸ The copy in the Harl. MSS. was addressed to sir John Assheton, knight, and to 69 other persons. p. 111.

³⁹ Harl. MSS. p. 112. ⁴⁰ Ib. p. 126.

⁴¹ If Richard had not been short, the prelate who came ambassador to him from Scotland, would not, in his complimentary address delivered to him on his throne, have quoted these lines :

— ‘ nunquam tantum animum natura minori
Corpo, nec tantas, visu est, includere vires.
Major in exiguo regnabat corpore virtus.’

Bucke, p. 572. Nor would he have made such an illusion, if it had not been well known that Richard cared not about it. So Pol. Virgil represents Dr. Shaw, as calling on the people to remark, that he was ‘ pusillus’ like his father, and not ‘ statura magnus,’ as Edward IV. was known to be. p. 544. Rouse, his contemporary, mentions, that he was ‘ corpore parvus; parvæ staturæ.’ p. 216-18.

⁴² I think that the declaration of the old countess Desmond, who had

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

BOOK
IV.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

figure was small and had been much weakened by illness,⁴³ and his left arm seems to have been a shrunk or defective limb;⁴⁴ it is rather singular that he should have been so fond of personal exhibitions in public state, where almost every surrounding courtier must have excelled him in that appearance and deportment which strike or fascinate the eye. But a vigorous mind never feels or thinks of its bodily imperfections. Conscious of its powers, using them with energy, and undervaluing all other distinctions, Richard cared as little for his dwarfish height, as Alexander the Great for his wry neck. Both loved fame, admiration, and audible applause, too much, to forego the gratification from any dread of personal criticism. The visible pomp of ceremonial majesty, centering in himself, which he could display; the

danced with Richard, that he was the handsomest man in her room, except his brother, (Walp. Hist. Doubts, p. 102,) sufficient evidence as to the beauty of his face; and it seems to me to be implied, by the Scotch orator's saying to him, 'he beholds *thy face* worthy of the highest empire and command.' Bucke, 572. Polydore Virgil described it to have been like his father's, short and compact, without the fulness of his brother's. p. 544. Rous also mentions him 'as curtam habens faciem.' p. 216. More mentions his face to have been hard favored or warly, p. 154; which Grafton understands to be warlike, p. 758; as Hall also, p. 343; tho he chuses to add from himself, the epithet of crabbed. As his body was publicly exposed after his fall in battle, for some time at Leicester, the distorted features of violent death, in a state of the highest exertion and passion, may have fixed an unfavorable impression of his countenance on the crowds that flocked to contemplate him.

⁴³ That he was 'viribus debilis,' or weak in body, we have the sufficient authority of Rous, p. 218. I have lost my note of the authority from which I take the facts of Richard's previous illness; and can therefore only mention it from memory, without being able to specify the reference.

⁴⁴ If this had not been well known to be the fact, it is not likely it would have had so prominent a part in More's detail of the arrest of Hastings. p. 202. He declares, that 'no man was there present but well knew that his arm was ever such since his birth.' Ib. Rous mentions his having unequal shoulders; the right the highest. p. 216. This may have been true: the striking deformity would rest on the degree. For the hump back and crooked form, I think we have no adequate authority.

animating acclamations from the surrounding myriads, which he could hear; and the venerating homage of the proud nobles, assiduous knights, and delighted citizens, that he could behold, were sources of enjoyment to Richard's taste and self-admiration, which overwhelmed all sense or belief of any depreciating inferiority, even to his late tall and dignified brother. Hence, he courted that kingly state which Edward slighted ; and as he could not shine like him, at the dance or the banquet, he multiplied the occasions of public pageantry, to gain that admiration for his regal splendor, which nature had denied him from her elegant proportions.

At Nottingham the idea seems to have suddenly occurred to him, of having a day of splendid state at York, with the unusual ceremony of a second coronation. That the city which had so much befriended his family, and in which he had so frequently resided, might see him in all that exalting display of majesty, which adds awe to attachment, and feasts the vanity with a banquet to the senses as well as to the self-contemplating mind, was no unnatural wish in a man so fond of the dramatic parade of new greatness; and he prepared for the gratification with much elaborate and forethinking care. On the 23d of August, his secretary wrote from Nottingham to the mayor of York, directing him to prepare to receive Richard and his queen: to dispose himself to do as well with the suitable pageants, as on so short a warning could be devised; and to have the streets hung, thro which the king would pass, with cloths of arms and tapestry.* Having sent this precursory excitation, he removed on to the northern metropolis; and corres-

* Drake's Eborac. p. 116.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

pondently to his wishes, the citizens received him with the pomp and triumph that he had called for and loved; and plays and pageants were for several days exhibited, in token of their joy, and for his amusement as well as for their own. He commended earnestly these loyal effusions; and to please both himself and them, appeared among them in his royal robes, with the sceptre in his hand, and the diadem on his head. He issued proclamations, that all proper persons should resort to York, on the day he named, to behold him, with his queen and son, in their high estate and degree; and to receive his thanks for their good will.⁴⁶ On the 31st of August, he dispatched a written mandate to the keeper of his wardrobe, in London, to deliver to the bearers the rich dresses in which he was desirous of exhibiting himself at his meditated ceremony; and he specifies these with an exactness and descriptive detail, as if they were as minutely registered in his manly memory, as in that of his queen's mistress of the robes. The abundance and variety of what he sends for, imply a solicitude for his personal exhibition, which we should rather look for from the fop that annoyed Hotspur, than from the stern and warlike Richard III.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Grafton, p. 807.⁴⁷ 'We will and charge you to deliver to the bringers hereof, *for us*, the parcels following.' He then enumerates,

One doublet of purple sattin, lined with galand cloth, and outlined with buske.

One ditto of tawney sattin, lineaed in likewise.

Two short gowns of crimson cloth of gold, that one with droppue, and that other with nett, lined with green velvet.

One cloke, with a cape of violet ingrained, the both lineaed with black velvet.

One stomacher of purple sattin.

One ditto of tawney.

One gown of green velvet, lineaed with tawney sattin.

One yard three quarters corse of silk, medled with gold.

As moche black corse of silk for our spars.

But it was the foible of his heart ; and like all the secret idols of our self-love, it kept its station within its interior temple ; however bustling and contrasted might be the living scenery that surrounded it.

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

On the appointed day, the clergy led the state procession in copes richly vested ; and at the most impressive part of the moving pomp, the king appeared with his crown and sceptre, in the fullest majesty which royal apparel could impart. A numerous train of nobility followed, preceding his queen, bearing also her diadem ; and leading in her hand their little son, ten years old, with golden rod, and demy-crown. The effect was as great as the kingly contriver had anticipated or could desire. The flattered and delighted populace of the rude north, which had never witnessed such a spectacle since the days of the Anglo-Saxon octarchy, shouted their tumultuous rapture, and extolled him to the skies.⁴⁸

One yard and an half and two nails of white cloth of gold for a crynebre
for a bard.

Five yards of black velvet for lining of a gown of green satin.

One plackard, made of part of the same.

Two nails of white cloth of gold, lined with buckram.

Three pair of spurs, short, all gilt.

Two pair of spurs, long, white, parcel gilt.

Two yards of black buckram for amendment of the lining of divers
trappures.

One banner of sarsenet, of our Lady.

Ditto of the Trinity.—Ditto of St. George.—Ditto of St. Edward.—

Ditto of St. Cuthbert.

One, of our own arms, all sarsenet.

Three coats of arms, beaten with fine gold, *for our own person*.

Five coats of arms, for heralds, lined with buckram.

Forty trumpet banners of sarsenet.

340 pensills of buckram.

350 pensills of tarteryn.

4 standards of sarsenet, with boars.

13 guynfins of fustian, with boars.

This has been printed from the Harl. MSS. N° 433. p. 126, in 1 Kennett.

* Grafton, 807. Pol. Virgil, 547. Croyland also mentions, that he held the most sumptuous and pompous feasts and banquets, to allure the minds of so great a people. 567.

BOOK
IV.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

While he remained at York, he knighted the Spanish ambassador.⁴⁹ He appointed one on his part, to compliment Ferdinand and Isabella; ⁵⁰ renewed his brother's league with them; and besides his credentials, addressed to both,⁵¹ he wrote a separate letter to her, of friendship and congratulation.⁵² In answer to an application, from James III. of Scotland, he expressed his wishes of remaining at peace with that country.⁵³ He created his son prince of Wales;⁵⁴ and after having thus enjoyed his royal state and authority, he left York for Pomfret, soon after the middle of September.

From Pomfret castle he wrote, on the 22d of September, to the mayor and corporation of Southampton; assuring them, that he would not suffer his dearest son, the prince, to intermeddle within their franchises, in the cause complained of.⁵⁵ The prince was at that time, under the care of lord Richard Bernall; and travelled in his chariot.⁵⁶ He appears to have been, at that time, reading a most costly primmer, corded with black satin, and his psalter; and to have been carefully surrounded with his due

⁴⁹ On 8 September. Rym. 12. p. 200.

⁵⁰ This was Barnard de la Forssa, ‘whom his highness at this time sendeth to his dearest cousyns, the king and queen of Spayne.’ Harl. MSS. p. 244.

⁵¹ Ib.

⁵² Ib. p. 246. Richard's answer to queen Isabella, dated York, 9 Sept. was in Latin. It addresses her as Most serene princess; our dearest cousin; your sublinity; wishes her every increase of happy fortune; assures her, that her ambassador had very prudently discharged his trust; and expressed many things, which the king had heard with the greatest pleasure. He informs her of the renewal of the treaty of amity between the two nations; and that he has commissioned his noble counsellor, Barnard de la Forssa, to transact with her all further measures.

⁵³ The letters of the two kings are in the Harl. MSS. p. 247.

⁵⁴ Hist. Croyl. 567. Pol. Virg. 547. ⁵⁵ Harl. MSS. p. 115.

⁵⁶ The warrant expresses besides, three waynes, ‘for th' expence of my lord prince's chariot; for their bating of the chariot at York.’ Harl. MSS. 118. So that the term is of some antiquity.

proportion of state :⁵⁷ and tho the improving boy was studying all his exercises and letters in England, his father made him lord lieutenant of Ireland.⁵⁸

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

Up to this period, Richard had done nothing contrary to the spirit of his age, or offensive to the moral feelings of the influencing classes. His measures, altho to us, who now balance all actions in the scales, not of worldly expedience, but of impartial rectitude, they appear to have been iniquitously violent; yet were considered by many, at that time, to have been politically wise, and most promotive on the whole of the public tranquillity. Hence, tho several may have lamented, few censured; most applauded, and all acquiesced. He might have reigned, like Henry IV. or Edward IV. alarmed by occasional

⁵⁷ The Harl. MSS. has preserved the warrant, (dated 25 Sept.) to allow 19*6*l.* 10*s.** for the expenses of the prince; and the particulars which it specifies, shew the minuteness of Richard's memory, and attention to all the points of dress, and of his family's concerns.

For green cloth for my lord prince.

For making of gowns of the same cloth.

For chusing of the king of West Witton; for rushes; for a cloth sack; for a horse bought.

For a feather to my lord prince.

Shoemaker, for stuff for my lord prince.

For the chusing of the king of Middeley.

For offerings for my lord prince, to our Lady, in several places.

Twenty-pence for my lord's drinking at King House.

For trussing cords; bridle bitt.

13*s.* 4*d.* for a prymer for my lord the prince.

7*s.* 10*d.* black sattin, for cording of it, and a psalter.

For my lord prince drinking at

31*l.* 0*s.* 10*d.* for the expenses of my lord prince's household, and the lord Richard, from St. Clymnesse to Midsummer-day.

6*s.* 8*d.* to M. D. for running on foot by side of my lord prince.

For cost of the hounds.

For coming with the jewels from London.

23*s.* 4*d.* for expense of my lord prince household, from York to Pomfret.

For three waynes, from York to Pomfret.

For the expense of my lord prince's chariot, from York to Pomfret.

For their batyng of the chariot at York.

For black velvet and fustian.

Harl. MSS. p. 118.

⁵⁸ MSS. ib. p. 24.

BOOK IV. and suppressible conspiracy, or partial insurrections; yet not endangered by any general disaffection. But Richard had not the constitutional intrepidity or carelessness of his brother. Brave, to the utmost edge of peril in the martial conflict, he was an intellectual coward; and preferred to prevent danger by crime, to conquering it by honorable combat, and unimpeachable valor. All his violences may be referred to this principle. Like the tiger, he would struggle unshrinkingly to death in the battle; but he would, if possible, crouch, crawl, and spring upon his victim when unprepared, and destroy him without the possibility of resistance. The difference may have proceeded from Edward's having made his ambition but his secondary gratification; while, in Richard, it was the first. Less personable than his brother, his vanity preferred power to female admiration. Richard was always afraid of his competitors; Edward defied them. Edward fought from the heart's impulse and pleasure; Richard from self-interest, pride, and necessity. Hence, Richard debased himself by wickedness, which Edward would have disdained. Alarm, jealousy, suspicion, and irritable vanity, debilitated the great qualities of the usurping king; while Edward was so fond of confidence, so self-relying, and so incapable of mistrust, that he never credited the possibility of his dangers till they occurred; and then leapt, at once, from the sybarite into the hero; and subdued them with an explosion of talent that seemed like inspiration; and yet which vanished as surprisingly, with the occasion that inflamed it. Hence, tho' his beloved queen, and her preferred relations, labored to fill his mind with doubts of Richard's conduct, they never could make him distrust or dis-

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

place his brother. His own heart was, to him, a sufficient pledge for this prince's fidelity ; and he employed him to the last in the highest stations of confidence, till he expired. We may add, that while Edward lived, Richard never violated the trust which his brother so generously placed in him.

If Richard had acted with this moral courage towards his dethroned nephew, and not attempted his life, his reign might have been long and glorious. But he forgot that the natural ties of blood between uncle and nephew are felt and venerated by the universal heart ; and that no one is so poor or base as not to acknowledge, exhibit, and exact the obligations. He violated this sacred bond ; and the war of human nature began in every breast against him.

From Pomfret, Richard proceeded gradually thro Gainsborough to Lincoln, which he reached on the 12th of October.⁵⁰ Not a cloud had occurred to disturb his political serenity, when he reached Pomfret; but after he left that castle, rumors of secret conspiracies began to reach his ear.

It is everlastingly true, that he who conquers by force, has overcome but half his foe. All the passions of hate, fear and revenge continue unabated ; and are as restless as they are tormenting. Richard and his friends had beaten down the party of the queen, and the young king ; but its leaders were still in sanctuaries and privileged places, where Richard could not assail them ; and his coronation amnesty had not appeased their resentment. They wanted power and revenge, not pardon ; and they continued their secret but active machinations against him.

⁵⁰ On 10th October, he signed at Gainsborough a warrant to pay the prior of Carlisle £. 5. towards making a glass window there. MS. Harl. p. 120.

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

BOOK
IV.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

Since the coronation, the princes had been withdrawn from public sight; and it was presumed that this would have prevented the public sympathy or recollection about them. On the contrary, it increased what it was meant to suppress. The people, especially in the southern and western counties, became uneasy at their confinement, and anxious for their liberation. At first they talked on the point in secret confidence. Some became more open in their sensibilities. Mutual communications of a common feeling produced meetings, of which the retired and sheltered chiefs eagerly availed themselves. They advised, that the queen's daughters, at least, should be made safe, and be taken in disguise from Westminster to foreign parts, in order that the crown should, thro them, return to the true heritors, if any evil should be perpetrated on the princes.⁶⁰

Immediately on being apprized of these devices, Richard, with his usual promptness and decision, had the abbey and all the circumjacent places surrounded with military works, like a castle or a fortress; and appointed, as keepers, men of great sternness, under one John Nesfeld, who watched all the passages to the abbey, and would suffer no one to go out or to enter, without reference to him.⁶¹

But the disturbed feeling increased, not only in the metropolis, but in all the surrounding counties; and all the king's political enemies began to hope that some commotion, advantageous to their interests, would occur.⁶² In this disquieting state, Richard became astonished to hear, and the discontented delighted

⁶⁰ Croyl. 567.⁶¹ Croyl. 568. The Harl. MS. contains several grants to Nesfeld, pp. 27. 38. 75. ⁶² lb.

to learn, that the name of the duke of Buckingham was connecting itself with this insurrectionary disposition.

This new and unexpected state of things came like a summer's sudden thunder-storm on the king. He had been exulting in all the joyous self-congratulation of his secured and elevating greatness; when he found a tempest collecting around him, to hurl him from the proud summit on which he thought himself seated for a long life of honor and applause.

In the midst of this public perturbation, Richard deemed it for his interest to diffuse the report, that the princes were no more. How they had died, or when; by what disease, or from whose violence, no one knew, and no inquiry could ascertain. The certainty of their deaths was all that was circulated; and these lamentable tidings, in this mysterious form, were left to have their expected effect of acting as a sedative to the public sympathy.⁶³ That their deaths would terminate all commotions, by teaching discontent its hopelessness, and compel every mind to regard Richard's line as their only dynasty, was the self-flattering calculation of his policy. He was astonished to find that a burst of public indignation and violent sensibility immediately followed, which portended the most perilous hostility. In every town, street, and public place, crowds assembled, openly wept, and piteously sobbed.⁶⁴ As their first lamentations subsided, the inward grudge increased; and a

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

⁶³ Pol. Virgil ascribes the circulation of the report to the king himself, for this purpose. p. 547. Grafton also declares, 'that he caused the rumor to be spread.' p. 805.

⁶⁴ Graft. 806. I have sometimes fancied, that the popular ballad of the Children in the Wood, may have been written at this time, on Richard and his nephews, before it was quite safe to stigmatise him more openly.

BOOK IV. general cry arose, that to destroy innocent babes, was an action which the whole world abhorred ; and that their blood called for vengeance from the Almighty providence. The queen was inexpressibly afflicted by the tidings. When they first reached her, she swooned senseless to the ground, and there lay long in the apparent grasp of death. When feeling and memory at length returned, she called upon her children by various tender names, as if they could hear her invocations, and become again present to her sight. She bitterly accused herself for surrendering up her little York ; and kneeling down, she implored heaven to avenge the treacherous perfidy of the destroyer, and her own irreparable loss.[“] Whatever benefit Richard expected from the publication of his nephews deaths, he failed utterly to acquire.

When the king found himself thus disappointed in the result, had he left it in his own power to retrieve the mischievous effects, by contradicting his own report, and producing his nephew to public view?—or had he, by an irrevocable crime, lost this advantage, and committed himself to those penal consequences, by which all guilt, sooner or later, finds itself to be pursued?—This is the nice question, which has divided the opinions of many able men ; and the appearance, in the next reign, of a person who pretended to be one of these princes, alleging that they had escaped from their uncle's intended cruelty, has caused some to doubt of that uncle's guilt. But it is certain that Richard, during his short subsequent reign, never avowed that they were alive, or shewed them to any one after the rumor of their fate ; nor diffused any question of its

“ Graft. 806.

truth, even when most pressed by Richmond's enmity. Richard acted uniformly afterwards, as if they were dead ; and, upon an impartial consideration of all the facts that can be traced, connected with the dire transaction, there seems no just reason for disbelieving their catastrophe.

From the atrociousness of the transaction, it was necessarily so secretly planned and executed, that the precise incidents could not be publicly known ; and the natural consequence of this ignorance was, that many would never credit so revolting a fact ; and that few could agree upon its reported circumstances.⁶⁶ The only writers we have, that were contemporary with the deed, were Fabian, Rous, and the author of the chronicle of Croyland. The first briefly mentions, that “the common fame went” that king Richard had within the Tower “put unto secret death the two sons of his brother.”⁶⁷ Rous remarks, “it was afterwards known to very few, by what death they suffered martyrdom.” The last author declares, “It was commonly reported, that the said sons of Edward were dead ; but by what kind of *violent* death, it was not known.”⁶⁸ Polydore Virgil, nearly a con-

⁶⁶ More remarks, ‘Some yet remain in doubt, whether they were, in Richard’s days, destroyed or no.’ 245.

⁶⁷ P. 516. Fabian was a merchant, and had been sheriff of London, and died in 1512. ‘He consequently lived on the spot, at this very interesting period.’ Walpole Hist. Doubts, p. 16. Rous, p. 215.

⁶⁸ Cont. Croyl. 569. The author of the continuation of the chronicle of Croyland, appears sometimes in a situation of personally knowing the transactions of the times; for we are told, in a marginal note, that he was a doctor of the canon law, and one of the king’s counsellors sent to Calais. Walp. ib. 16. The words of this doctor, in the text, do not imply so much an uncertainty as to the violence of Edward’s death, as of the kind of violence resorted to. Walpole, by misquoting the passage, has lessened its effect on himself, for he omitted to cite, and therefore to observe, the word ‘*violent*,’ p. 70. Buck quotes the passage, with the same mistake, 551.

BOOK IV. temporary, intimates the same uncertainty of the mode of their destruction.⁶⁰

**REIGN OF
RICH. III.**

The only detail we possess of the fate of these two princes, is transmitted to us by sir Thomas More, as he had heard it by such men and means, as it were hard but it should be true.⁶¹ He declares, that he learnt the particulars which he narrates, from those who knew much, and had little cause to lie; and that sir James Tyrrell, who undertook the foul deed, and Dighton, one of the murderers, who perpetrated it, confessed the facts as he has stated them.⁶²

According to these authorities, Richard, as he rode to Gloucester, devised the deed; and sent one John Green to sir Robert Brackenbury, the constable of the Tower, desiring him to make away with them. Brackenbury refused; and Green returned to the king at Warwick, with this answer. Richard received it with displeasure; and exclaimed, in the hearing of a page, "Whom shall a man trust, when those that I have brought up myself; those whom I thought would most surely serve me, even these fail me, and at my command will do nothing for me!" The page remarked to him, that a man lay upon a pallet, in the outer chamber, who, to do him pleasure, would think nothing too hard. This was sir James Tyrrell, a brave man, but who saw with envy that sir Richard Ratcliff and Catesby were soaring above him in his master's favor. The king, knowing Tyrrell's ambition, was struck with the recommendation; and going out to sir James, who was reposing with his brother Thomas, said merrily,

⁶⁰ 'Quo genere mortis miselli pueri affecti fuerint, non plane liquet.' But he declares decidedly, that Richard 'regios pueros necavit.' p. 547. So Rous calls them 'occisorum.'

⁶¹ More, 246.

⁶² Ib. 251.

“ What, sirs, are you a-bed so soon ? ” Then calling sir James into his chamber, he proposed his purpose. Tyrrell assented, and was dispatched next day with a letter to Brackenbury, to deliver to him the keys of the Tower, *for one night*. Receiving these, the unprincipled knight fixed the next evening for their destruction.

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

Edward, on being informed of his uncle’s coronation, had exclaimed, “ Ah ! would my uncle but let me have my life ; tho I should lose my kingdom : ” but soon afterwards, finding that he and his brother were shut up close, with only one rude servant to attend them, he apprehended what would be his fate. He never heeded his dress again ; and they gave themselves up to lamentation and despair. Tyrrell resolved to kill them in their beds ; and on the night after his arrival, introduced Miles Forrest, a noted ruffian, and John Dighton his groom, “ a big, broad, square, strong knave.” The persons near the prince’s room were removed. The two murderers entered their chambers unperceived, at midnight. The prince’s were sleeping in their beds ; the men wrapped them suddenly up, and entangled them in the clothes ; and throwing the feather bed and pillows upon their mouths, pressed these down till the poor children were smothered and expired. When the wretches saw that they were dead, they laid their bodies out on the bed, and called in Tyrrell to see them, who ordered them to be buried at the stair-foot, deep in the ground, under a heap of stones. Tyrrell then rode to the king, to inform him of the completion of the atrocious deed. Report added, that Richard disliking the place of their burial, Brackenbury’s chaplain was said to have removed them to another place ; but the

BOOK IV. **murderers knew nothing of this removal.⁷²** Hence, this last circumstance was an unauthorized addition of a later age, which the future discovery of the bodies in a place like that described by Tyrrell, proves to have been fabulous.

REIGN OF RICH. III. The fair caution of disinterested inquiry justifies the question, Whether we have as much confirmation of this account, from other authentic circumstances, as we can reasonably expect, of a deed so disgraceful? The authentic facts that have also come to light, corroborating this account, are these:—The bodies were dug for in Henry the Seventh's time, after the confession of the murderers, and were not found.⁷³ This naturally created doubts at that time; but the remains of two such bodies were accidentally discovered in the Tower, at the foot of a staircase, in the reign of Charles II.;⁷⁴ and thus one of the main facts

⁷² More, 246-250. Richard, by this time, must have reached Nottingham. He left Warwick, where Grene brought him Brackenbury's refusal, after the 13th of August. He was at Leicester on the 17th, 18th, and 19th; and at Nottingham before the 22d. These dates and places deserve attention, from their coincidence of time, between the murder of the princes and his own destruction. Both occurred in the month of August. He must have been at Leicester, near to the spot where he himself was slain, on the very day, two years afterwards, on which his agents killed them; and he probably received and triumphed in the news, on the 22d, which was destined to be the day in which he lost both his own crown and life.

⁷³ Buck's Life Richard III. p. 552. But their remains could occupy only a small space; and unless the exact spot were hit upon, the whole area of the Tower might have been excavated in vain, without that failure being any disproof of the alleged act. Henry VII. either did not dig for them, or if he did, missed the place; and hence circulated the rumor of the chaplain's removing them. It is remarkable, that More introduces the account of this removal, with 'they say,' and 'I have heard,' p. 250, as if it had been no part of the murderer's confession.

⁷⁴ This discovery is thus stated: 'In the time of Chichester, master of the ordnance, great heaps of records of bills and answers, lying in the Six clerks office, were removed thence, to be deposited in the White Tower. As they were making a new pair of stairs into the chapel there, the labourers in digging at the foot of the old stairs, came to the bones of consumed corpses, covered with a heap of stones. The proportion of the bones were answerable to the ages of these two royal youths.'

of the narration, is fully ascertained. But there are also documents existing, which prove, that each of the persons concerned in the dire transaction then existed, and received from Richard special rewards. John Grene, the first messenger to Brackenbury, was one of the yeomen of the king's chamber, and was made receiver of the lordship of the Isle of Wight, and of the castle and lordship of Porchester.⁷⁵ John Dighton, one of the assassins, had from the king the bailifship of Aiton, in the county of Stafford, with the accustomed wages, for his life. ⁷⁶Miles Forest, whom More calls a noted ruffian, was made keeper of the wardrobe, at Richard's mother's house, Bernard Castle; and dying before the Michaelmas of the year following the murder, an annuity of five marcs was settled upon his widow, and her son Edward, to be paid out of the rents of that place.⁷⁷ Sir James Tyrrell is described, in one of the king's grants to him, as the king's trusty knight, for his body,⁷⁸ and his counsellor.⁷⁹ He was made steward of the duchy of Cornwall, and an assessor

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

Charles II. was so well satisfied that these bones were theirs, that he had them honorably interred in Henry the Seventh's chapel, among their ancestors, with an inscription, which thus mentions the discovery, ‘Ossa desideratorum diu et multum quæsita post annos 191 scalarum in ru-deribus (scalæ istæ ad sacellum Turris Albæ nuper ducebant) alte defossa indiciis certissimis sunt reperta, 17 die Julii, A.D. 1674.’ Annot. to Kennet, Hist. 1. p. 551. From this discovery it would seem, that they were found in a place similar to that in which they were mentioned to have been first buried; and that the chaplain's removal of them, was an unfounded supposition.

⁷⁵ 1 Kennet Hist. 552. There is also a general pardon to John Green, in the Harl. MSS. p. 28.

⁷⁶ Harl. MSS. N° 433, p. 55.

⁷⁷ I found in the Harl. MSS. N° 443, an order to pay her 5 marcs, for the wages due to her late husband, for this situation, p. 187; and a grant of this annuity, p. 78. A Henry Forest was also appointed bailiff of Kymberworth, and keeper of the park, with the accustomed wages; and also an annuity of 13*l.* 18*s.* 4*d.* from the preceding Michaelmas. id. MSS. More says, this Miles Forest rotted peacemeal away. p. 251. The grant to his widow, proves that he lived only a few months afterwards.

⁷⁸ Harl. MSS. p. 122.

⁷⁹ Ib. 202.

BOOK
IV.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

of the land there ; and steward of many lordships in South Wales and in its marches ; supervisor of the castle of Guynes, and constable of the castle of Dundagel, and governor of Glamorganshire ; and had several other gifts of wards and marriages.⁸⁰ To sir Robert Brackenbury, the grants of manors and benefits are so numerous, as to imply more than usual reason for the royal liberality ;⁸¹ and one which appoints to him an annuity of forty pounds a year, from the 1st of August 1483,⁸² is very remarkable, as that suits the time of the message sent him by Greene. His answer was brought back to the king, at Warwick, which city Richard reached between the 4th and 9th of August. Brackenbury would not commit the murder, but he acquiesced in letting Tyrrell be master of the Tower for the night that was wanted for the perpetration of the crime ; knowing the purpose of this intervention. He was, therefore, a complete accessory ; and his rewards imply, that he was so considered and remunerated. They bribed also his silence ; and he never quitted the chief murderer's service.

⁸⁰ See Harl. MSS. pp. 26. 54. 58. 67. 75. 93. 104. 164. 200 205.—He was also employed on a mission over sea, into Flanders, 200 : and Thomas Tyrrell had an annuity of forty pounds, p. 25.

⁸¹ Besides his appointment of constable of the Tower, he had a grant of 100*l.* a year, for life, and was made master of the mint. Several manors of lord Rivers, others of the Cheneys ; and various lands in Kent, Sussex, and Surrey, were given to him. He was also made the receiver-general of the king's lands in these counties ; the surveyor of many places in Essex and Kent, for life, with the accustomed wages ; steward of all the forests in Essex ; and of some lordships, and constable of the castle of Tunbridge, besides pecuniary grants. See Harl. MSS. pp. 23. 56. 67. 75. 87. 91. 103. He also had ‘the keeping of the Lyons in the Tower, for life, with the wages of twelve pence a day for himself, and six-pence a day for the meat of every lion and leopard.’ Ib. p. 56.

⁸² The answer returned by Brackenbury, implies, not any moral reluctance, but a legal fear of consequences : ‘that he would never put them to death, *to die therefore.*’ More. Harl. MSS. N° 433. pp. 67. 247.

To these facts it may be added, that the murder of the princes was believed in the foreign courts, whose ambassadors were in England at the time; for Comines, who was so intimate with Louis XI. and the duke of Burgundy, states it unhesitatingly in his *Memoires* as a truth⁸³; tho a report of their escape and survival was also circulated⁸⁴; which the lapse of time which had occurred when the historian who has transmitted it to us penned it, sufficiently refutes. If the young king had escaped to some unknown part of the world, he must have reappeared, or his residence and death have been heard of by the time that Polydore Virgil wrote, in the reign of Henry VIII. Such a rumor resembles that of the British belief, that their Arthur was not dead, and would revisit his expecting countrymen.

Sir Thomas More's intimation, that some doubted of this murder even in his time; and lord Bacon's remark, that at Henry the Seventh's accession, there were not wanting secret rumors and whisperings, which afterwards gathered strength, and turned to great troubles, that the two princes, or one of them, were not indeed murthered, but secretly conveyed away, and were then living;⁸⁵ were no more than such rumors or hopes as the friends of the house of York would circulate, in their anxiety to divest Richard's memory, as one of their party, from so great a stain, and to keep alive a discontent against Henry VII. The inevitable variety of surmises which could not but attend a transaction that was necessarily kept, from its very atrocity, in the greatest silence and obscurity,

⁸³ ‘Il avoit fait mourir les deux fils du roi Edouard, son frère.’ L. 6.

⁸⁴ So Polydore Virgil: ‘In vulgus fama valuit filios Edwardi regis aliquo terrarum partem migrasse atque ita superstites esse.’ L. 2. c. 6.

⁸⁵ Bacon Hist. 1 K. p. 579.

BOOK
IV.
REIGN OF
RICH. III.

will also sufficiently account for the scepticism of many. Almost all murders, from their privacy, are defective in direct evidence. Enmity to Henry afterwards, and the hope of their Edward the Fourth's line not being extinct, would as certainly feed and spread these rumors, however romantic, as long as that generation lasted, to whom it was material to realize them. That the story of their destruction should be also told in various ways, as More confesses, and Bucke intimates that it was,⁸⁶ is coincident with the uniform experience of mankind on all secret crimes and private occurrences. But More, whose abilities and integrity all confess, has left us this impressive declaration, that notwithstanding these doubts and variations, he selected the truest account from the best authorities.⁸⁷

It is unlikely that, of an action so generally reprobated, so dangerous to the safety of all the perpetrators from popular indignation, and so indelibly infamous to their character, more certainty could be known, in Richard's life, than Fabian, Rous, and Croyland have expressed.⁸⁸ Tho he circulated their death, he denied their assassination. His power was ready to crush every known accuser as a treasonable slanderer.⁸⁹ His liberalities hushed to silence all who

⁸⁶ Bucke mentions two of the rumors that were circulated. One was, that the youths were embarked in a ship at the Tower wharf, and conveyed to the sea, to be there thrown into the deep; the other, that they were not drowned, but set somewhere safe ashore. p. 550.

⁸⁷ More, 547.

⁸⁸ This accounts for the expressions of the monk of Croyland, on which Walpole lays so much stress, p. 72, 3. The words, 'if any thing had happened to the boys in the Tower,' and that, 'during the coronation at York, they remained in the Tower,' only indicate the author's uncertainty of their fate. No one could know the exact time of their deaths; and all would be unwilling for some time to believe it.

⁸⁹ He had one Collingbourne executed as a traitor, for writing this

C H A P.
VIII.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

could have revealed the dangerous truth. The non-appearance of the princes to the usual attendants at the Tower, was all that could safely get abroad, on any real authority. Hence, the belief of their destruction increasing every day from their continued invisibility, and strengthened by the new whispers circulated from Buckingham, and his new partisans, without any deciding certainty of the fact, or knowledge of the precise mode, would be all that could pervade the public mind, until the actual perpetrators chose to dislodge their self-degrading secret.⁹⁰

No date is, nor perhaps could be, given to the beginning or gradual progress of those secret murmurs, and consequential plottings, which arose from the public sympathy for the protracted confinement of the princes. The compassionating emotions of many would arise as soon as Richard took the throne, in the last week of June. The queen's friends would undoubtedly, from that time, become more zealous; as they had, from that action, a juster ground to depreciate him. The compassionating emotions, and the plans which these excited, probably increased as the month of July advanced; and by the beginning of

distich, alluding to his chief counsellors, Catesby, Ratcliffe, and Lovel, and to his own arms of the boar:

‘The cat, the rat, and Lovel the dog,
Rule all England under the hog.’ Graft. 828.

But this man also maintained a treasonable correspondence with Richmond. See next chapter, note 43.

⁹⁰ To Walpole's summary of objections against the supposed murder, 125-7, may be opposed the reasons of Mr. Hume, adopted by Mr. Gibbon, for accrediting it. See Hume's History, and Gibbon's remarks on lord Orford's book, in his Miscellaneous Works, v. 3. p. 341-9. M. Laing's observations have been considered by M. Lingard. The new facts adduced in this History, may be allowed to place Richard's other actions in a light more favorable to his character; but on the murder of his nephews, his memory must remain with all its former stains. It can neither be vindicated nor denied.

BOOK
IV:

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

August, enough of them may have reached Richard's too watchful ear, to have agitated or determined his alarmed ambition, to endeavor to end the growing danger, by destroying its innocent cause. This view sufficiently suits the reported chronology of the direful action; and as the worst of men cannot shed blood without compunction,⁹¹ it seems more natural to ascribe the murder of the princes rather to Richard's accustomed policy, of anticipating perils by the most daring violence, than to any depraved cruelty of a villainous temper. Our nature may become sadly defiled, but it has great aspirings, and generous sympathies; nor will Richard be thought to have been without them, when the whole of his actions are impartially considered.

The sudden idea, conceived while he was at Nottingham, of a second coronation at York, may have had some connection with his nephews death, of which, at or just before this time, he became apprized. This event made him the next male heir to the crown; and the strange sophistry, which at times beguiles the strongest reason, may have led him to imagine that a subsequent coronation would have some mysterious efficacy of converting usurpation into a more conscientious right. The ceremonial religion of that day abounded with these self-misleading illusions. Even the voice of law has not hesitated to say, that the succession to the crown removes all preceding criminality. Richard may have learnt this maxim

⁹¹ I lately read of a hardened and long practised depredator, who had gone up stairs to collect the booty, while his companions secured the family, so shocked on coming down, to see the master of the house, who had resisted, expiring on the floor, that he ran immediately out of it, abandoning the booty, and never joined the same associates again. I cannot but think, that Richard decided reluctantly on the deed, to secure his own safety.

from Catesby ; and to benefit himself by its legal and religious balm, as well as to gratify his love of pomp, he may have resorted to his re-consecration in York cathedral.

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

But if public sympathy only had arisen to disquiet him, tho' he would have been mortified by the departure of that popular estimation, which no one loses with indifference, and of which he was so peculiarly fond ; yet he would not have been permanently endangered by a sensibility, that usually, if left to itself, subsides, ere long, into tranquil aversion, or conversational censure. But he was astonished to find that it was headed by an active leader ; that Buckingham was this promoting chieftain ; and that the intimation of the deaths of his nephews, instead of precluding all further disloyalty, had only led the dissatisfied mind to look elsewhere for a new sovereign, and to have already selected the young earl of Richmond for this high station ; a competitor, whom Richard, at that time, could only undervalue and despise.

This revolution in Buckingham was one of the most extraordinary circumstances of this unprincipled and anti-natural period ; in which all the moral bonds between man and man, friend, relation, king and subject, seemed to have been as fleeting and as fragile as the winter's icicle. It appears to have even astonished Richard himself, for he calls him, in his own postscript to the letter he wrote, as soon as he knew of it, on the 12th of October, " the most untrue creature living—that had the most cause to be true ;"^{**} and considering, that those who had stood in the duke's way, with claims for power and emolument, Hastings, Rivers, and others, had perished ; and that

^{**} See the letter cited in the following note, 476.

BOOK IV. no other nobleman had so much aided Richard, and so efficaciously ; and, therefore, that he possessed so completely the vantage ground, for the royal favor, and its consequential advantages ; it is surprising, that Buckingham should have preferred rebellion to aggrandizement ; and treason, with all its perils, to elegant, honored, and gratified security.

REIGN OF RICH. III.

We have no transmitted explanation of his motives but the rather-gossiping narrative of Sir Thomas More, derived apparently from cardinal Morton, with its continuation by other chroniclers ; and from this, and from the impartial exertion of unbiased historical criticism, we must endeavor to account for a phenomenon so peculiar.

That the duke, directly after the demise of Edward IV. sent to Richard, at York, a private offer of his attachment and services ;⁹³ and from that time, had steadily counselled ; and without either moral hesitation, or legal timidity, had co-operated with the protector up to his coronation, every authority concurs to prove. The cause of their subsequent difference, sir Thomas More confesses to have been variously reported ;⁹⁴ but it is manifest, that the duke himself began the hostility.

That it arose, as some declared, from the king's rejection of his solicitation for the lands of the earl of Hereford,⁹⁵ is refuted by the royal grant already noticed.⁹⁶ But More says, that he accused the king to Morton, of *delaying* this concession.⁹⁷ This may be true. The official instrument, which was not granted till a week after the coronation, may have been yielded with a reluctance, as offensive to an

⁹³ More, p. 252.

⁹⁴ See before, p. 437.

⁹⁵ Ib. 253.

⁹⁷ More, 253.

⁹⁶ Ib.

haughty spirit as a denial; and the terms of this document, which left it, in fact, to a distant parliament to confirm or annul, gave no unquestionable certainty, that the coveted possessions would be ultimately enjoyed. Richard manifestly, by this mode of granting them, preserved the power of defeating his own favor, by the voice of parliament, if circumstances should arise to lessen the duke's cordiality, or to alter his own policy. He may have intentionally placed it in this position, as a cautionary tie upon Buckingham's stability. The duke may have felt this; and have also considered such a provisional favor as little better than that personal refusal, which he chose to complain of to Morton.⁹⁸

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

But Buckingham also stated other grievances. He declared, that he had been refused the high constableship of England, which many of his predecessors had enjoyed.⁹⁹ This office Richard chose to give to lord Stanley, who walked in it at the coronation.¹⁰⁰ This may have roused the duke's jealousy, with the fear of an advancing rival; as well as mortified his proud rapacity. He complained also, that he had thought the king to be as tractable, and without cruelty, as he now found him to be the contrary.¹⁰¹ The death of the princes, without his agreeing or condescending, was another complaint,¹⁰² probably

⁹⁸ More, 253. Yet Richard had given him so much wealth, as to enable him to boast, that he had as many liveries of Stafford Knotts as the great earl of Warwick had of ragged staves. Rous. Hist.

⁹⁹ Grafton, 816. He was, however, made, after Richard's accession, lord chamberlain, Harl. MSS. p. 433, p. 22, the long retained dignity of Hastings.

¹⁰⁰ Graft. 800. Yet there is a grant of this office to Buckingham, in the Harl. MSS. 433. p. 22; but it has been obliterated. Dugdale makes the 15th July the date of this appointment. 1 Bar. 169. It may have been, at last, extorted by importunity; but it was conferred on Stanley again; for there is a grant of it to him in the same MS. p. 29.

¹⁰¹ Ib. 815.

¹⁰² Ib. 816.

BOOK
IV.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

because it announced, that his services for further violences were not essential ; and that others could be found as auxiliary as himself. It is highly probable, that Richard soon began to act the independent king ; and to shew, that he meant to have no lordly governor, to the disappointment of Buckingham's presuming and expected dictatorship. To these avowed motives, we may also add, that both were too fond of personal state and popular admiration, to be capable of acting cordially together on the high public stage of courtly life. The king's splendor necessarily outshone the duke's ; and from Richard's peculiar taste, was ostentatiously displayed. Buckingham could not but feel this, in every step of the progress from London to Gloucester. The ducal fop was transcended by the royal coxcomb ; and could only see his master's superiority with a malign envy, which would recollect, that that master was indebted to him for the splendor and exaltation, which sank him to be but its page and dwarf, and ministering contributor.¹⁰²

Richard enjoyed his own pomp with too much self-complacency to think of the duke's feelings on this subject, unless to be secretly gratified with his own superiority. But the facts, that altho' Buckingham was his lord chamberlain, he did not invite the duke to attend him farther ; nor to be the companion of his state, when he received the Spanish ambassador at Warwick ; nor at his York festivities and coronation ; discover to us that he also felt himself to be incum-

¹⁰² Buckingham's description to Morton, of his own feelings to Richard, during their journey to Gloucester, is, 'I bore closely, and suffered patiently : and covertly remembered; outwardly dissimulating what I inwardly thought. And so with a *painted countenance* I passed the last summer in his company; not without many fair promises, but without any good deeds.' Grafton, 816.

bered or inconvenienced, in some respect or other, by the duke. Whether he found this nobleman making himself too prominent, or assuming too much authority ; or too craving in his demands, or too fretful, from some ill-concealed dissatisfaction, it is certain that he parted from him at Gloucester ; tho with every exterior testimony of honor and liberalities ; and pursued his royal journey with his other courtiers, but without that associate who thought himself entitled to be every where the most distinguished favorite and indispensable friend.

That the duke's wounded vanity was the main cause of his rebellion, seems to have been the opinion of the best informed among his contemporaries ; for More mentions it at last as their declared sentiment : "Very truth it is that the duke was an high-minded man, and ill could bear the glory of another. So that I have heard of some, who said they saw it, that at such time as the crown was first set on the protector's head, the duke's eye could not abide the sight, but he wried his head another way."¹⁰⁴

The pride of his family, already noticed,¹⁰⁵ increases the probability of this representation. And when human nature once gives way to the instigations

¹⁰⁴ More, 254. At the Westminster coronation, Buckingham held the royal train, but Stanley carried the mace of the lord high constable. Graft. 800, 1. The duke's may have been the most friendly position in the ceremony, but was not the most displaying. He had to expand his sovereign's splendid robe, and not to manage gracefully his own. They who remember, at his present Majesty's coronation, the effect of lord Castlereagh's appearance as the procession moved to the abbey ; from his walking alone in an interval of its state : from his distinguishing movement of his superb hat and feathers, and the dignified ease and elaborate carefulness with which he so frequently paused, and looked around him on the admiring multitude, will feel what a superior advantage for such a personal exhibition, the duke would have had as constable, to what he was obliged to submit to, in his quiet and confining duty of train-bearer. The whole scene must have been a continuing mortification to his swelling vanity.

¹⁰⁵ See before, p. 354.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

of ambitious vanity and rapacious selfishness, no limits can be assigned to its perverted deviations. A spirit then takes the governance of the conduct, which has nothing in unison with either reason or rectitude.

The progress of Buckingham's mind, from discontent and envy, to aversion, hatred, conspiracy and rebellion, has been delineated by himself, in his conference with bishop Morton, while in his custody at Brecon.¹⁰⁶

Altho the most hostile feelings had begun to rankle in his bosom,¹⁰⁷ he left Richard at Gloucester, with apparent cheerfulness, and without exciting any suspicion of his displeasure; another indication that the king was surrounded with hypocrisy, which he was either too confiding to suspect, or too dull, with all his own imputed dissimulation, to penetrate.¹⁰⁸

In his way to Brecon, the duke began to consider how he could deprive Richard of his royal seat and princely dignity;¹⁰⁹ and his first conception shews us that every absurdity of arrogance and egotism, is credible of the haughty and irritable nobility of the fifteenth century. Blood or ancestry was, in their estimation, the summit of human merit; the patent of

¹⁰⁶ As the bishop left his own account of this reign (see further, note 118,) and his dexterous management of Buckingham's mind, could not fail to be a conspicuous part of it, this conversation may be deemed peculiarly authentic.

¹⁰⁷ Buckingham's words are, ‘How my heart inwardly grudged! insomuch that I so abhorred the sight, and much more the company of him, that I could no longer abide in his court, except I should be openly revenged, and so I fayned a cause to depart.’ Graft. 816. He chose to connect these feelings with the death of the princes; but they were not only then alive, but no measures were taken for their destruction, till after the duke's departure.

¹⁰⁸ So the duke said, ‘with a merry countenance, and a despiteful heart, I took my leave humbly of him (at Gloucester,) he thinking nothing less than that I was displeased, and so returned to Brecon.’
Grafton, ib. ¹⁰⁹ Ib.

right to every honor and advantage, and the justification of every action to attain them. Buckingham's first idea was to claim the crown himself!¹¹⁰ The facility and frequency with which the English throne had been usurped since the accession of Richard II. had destroyed all that divinity which our Shakspeare thought always hedged a king; and England's hereditary monarchy had been become as unstable as an elective one. The crown was attacked, on every fancied provocation, with as little remorse as a yeoman's freehold, an abbot's meadow, or a merchant's purse. In the increasing murmurs of the people, Buckingham says, "I saw my chance as perfectly as I saw my own image in a glass; and that there was no person could or should have won the ring or got the goal before me; and on this point I rested, in imagination secretly with myself, two days at Tewkesbury."¹¹¹

His next deliberation was, how he should acquire it. To attempt to wrest it by force, as a conqueror, from Richard, would, he thought, set the nobility against him. But he remembered, that he had a claim of right to it; and he thought, this branch of his politic devise would bring forth fair flowers.¹¹²

It happened, that the duke had three distant, but imperfect links, to the English crown. He was descended by a maternal ancestor, from the duke of Gloucester, the youngest son of Edward III., who had suffered under Richard II. But this was preceded by the Lancastrian line, with which the same lady connected him through whom he claimed the Hereford

¹¹⁰ "First, I phantasied, that if I list to take upon me the crown and imperial sceptre of the realm, now was the time propice and convenient." *Grait. 816.*

¹¹¹ *Ib.*

¹¹² *Ib.*

BOOK IV. lands;¹¹³ and became allied in blood to Henry IV. Yet the lineal right on which his heated fancy preferred to rest, was, that his mother was the heiress of the house of Somerset, which, by Gaunt's third wife, asserted itself to be the next in succession to the crown.¹¹⁴

REIGN OF RICH. III.

The delusions of vanity are at all times ludicrous mockeries. He says, “I thought sure, that I was next heir to Henry VI. This title pleased well such as I made privy of my council; but much more it encouraged my foolish desire and intent; insomuch that, clearly I judged, and in my own mind, determinately resolved, that I was the undoubted heir of the house of Lancaster: and upon this concluded to make my first foundation, and erect my new building.”¹¹⁵

What overturned this fantastic day dream? A casual meeting the next day, between Worcester and Bridgnorth, with the real heiress of the house of Somerset, from an elder branch to his own, in his cousin Margaret, the countess of Richmond, whom in his hasty vision of greatness he had entirely forgotten. Her sudden appearance to his eye-sight, brought him to the recollection, that her son, the earl of Richmond, preceded him in the line that connected him with the crown. Her conversa-

¹¹³ His great grandfather, Edmund, had married Ann, the daughter of the duke of Gloucester, and thro her mother, one of the coheirs of the earl of Hereford. 1 Dugg. Bar. 163. Richard's aversion to grant him the Hereford lands, was, from its apparently sanctioning a claim of affinity to Henry IV. and thro that to the crown. Pol. Virg. 549. Henry the Fifth's mother was the sister of Buckingham's female ancestor. Harl. MSS. 433. p. 108. ¹¹⁴ See before, p. 156.

¹¹⁵ Graft. 817. The project of being king, descended into his son; for he was accustomed to say, that he would so manage the matter, that if Henry VIII. died without issue, he would attain the crown. Herb. Hen. VIII. p. 109.

tion soon convinced him of this; and hearing him talk of deposing Richard, her maternal feeling induced her to urge him, if he moved at all, to make her Henry the sovereign instead; and to strengthen his title by allying him to one of Edward's daughters.¹¹⁶ His own disappointment was too recent to listen favorably to this proposal. He passed over her suggestion, gave her fair words, and so departed. But in his lodging, he revolved what she had said; and satisfied at last, that his project as to himself was hopeless, he determined to seat her son on Richard's throne.¹¹⁷ To such a casual meeting as this, was Henry VII. indebted for the first avenue that led him to the English sceptre.

Reaching Brecon, with this new idea full in his resenting mind, a communication of sympathy and thought soon took place between him and his prisoner, the bishop of Ely. The prelate, a man of no common sagacity, soon glided into his confidence; applauded his adoption of Richmond for their king, and his marriage with Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of Edward IV.; and beginning to frame the means of accomplishing both designs,¹¹⁸ asked him who should be first applied to in such a perilous undertaking. The mother of Henry, was Buckingham's answer. "If you begin there," replied the sagacious bishop, "I have an old friend in her service, one Reginald

¹¹⁶ Graft. 818. ¹¹⁷ Ib.

¹¹⁸ Graft. 809-819. More's own narration ends abruptly with the beginning of this conversation; but Grafton, Hall and Hollinsbed continue it, with circumstances that could have come only from the bishop. His work, on Richard III. was in More's possession. The marginal note in Kennett's collection, v. i. p. 546, says of it, 'This book was lately in the hands of Mr. Roper, of Eltham, as sir Edward Hoby, who saw it, told me.' It is not now to be found; but the old chroniclers appear to have transmitted to us its substance, and by so doing have contributed to its disappearance.

BOOK
IV.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

Bray, in whose probity and judgment you may confide.”¹¹⁹ Bray was sent for to Brecon, and employed to persuade his mistress to arrange the projected marriage, with the queen and her daughter. Morton having so ably started his game, escaped against the duke’s wishes to Ely, that no change of purpose might compromise his safety, and thence passed into Flanders. The countess sent her physician, Dr. Lewis, to the queen at Westminster, who was admitted to her without suspicion, thro the military fortifications, and by the Argus-eyed commander, from his professional and respected character. The queen promised that all her friends should support Henry, if he would solemnly pledge himself to wed her daughter. Bray enlisted some distinguished persons in the same cause; and Ursewick, a priest, with Mr. Conway, were dispatched to Richmond, with the interesting communications. The queen’s friends, apprized of her wishes, promised a zealous support.¹²⁰ Other persons went to Richmond, with invitations to land: and the 18th of October was fixed as the day for his landing, for Buckingham’s raising the standard of revolt against Richard; and for a general insurrection of all their friends, in the several counties of England, which were disposed to favor them.

Buckingham embarked in his new enterprise with a zeal and an activity, which, by coinciding with the excited sympathies for the young children, produced the most formidable effects. All those who had begun to stir, perceiving that if they could not find

¹¹⁹ Grafton, 819. Bray had been steward to the duke’s uncle, sir Henry Stafford, Margaret’s second husband, and as such is mentioned in her will; and was continued in the same office, by his widow, after her third marriage with lord Stanley. *a Carte Hist.* 812.

¹²⁰ Graft. 820-2. Pol. Virg. 549-551.

a new captain for their party that would be generally acceptable they would all be ruined,¹²¹ heard with pleasure of the selection and acquiescence of Richmond, whose name had also occurred to many. Each made correspondent preparations. Some put strong garrisons, with these feelings, in convenient fortresses. Some kept armed men privately, ready to move as soon as the earl should land. Others applied themselves to solicit the populace, and to urge them to insurrection; and some, by secret letters and disguised messengers, invited all whom they knew to have any grudge against the king, to unite with their designs.¹²²

CHAP.
VIII.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

Richard was too vigilant, and too suspicious of all, not to obtain speedy information, that great designs were in agitation, flowing from Buckingham, or connected with his name. Unable to understand a relation so strange, he wrote a kind invitation to the duke to visit him. An indisposition was the excusing answer. A peremptory summons roused Buckingham to reply, that he would not come to his mortal enemy, whom he neither loved nor favored.¹²³ This language needed no comment; but was soon explained, by the information which now streamed upon the king, of the avowed preparations for revolt, which were every where making.

In consistency with his own determinate character, he wrote on the 12th of October, to London, for his great seal, that he might have the full official means of enforcing, with energy and rapidity, whatever measures he should deem advisable. And in this letter, he tells his chancellor, that he intended briefly

¹²¹ Croyl. 568.¹²² Graft. 822.¹²³ Graft. 823. Pol. Virg. 551. Hall, 393.

BOOK
IV.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

to advance against his rebel and traitor, the duke of Buckingham; and that all about himself was well, and truly determined to act against this unfaithful enemy.¹²⁴

He received the great seal on the 16th of October, at the Angel Inn, at Grantham, and kept it in his own custody: using it as he thought proper, until he re-delivered it to his chancellor at Westminster.¹²⁵

But whatever antipathy the queen's friends might have against Richard, they could not all persuade themselves to join a man who had aided so cordially in all his violences but the last, as Buckingham had publicly done. Hence, though her son the marquis Dorset escaped out of sanctuary, and took arms; the son of sir Thomas Vaughan, that had been executed at Pomfret, assembled his relations and friends, and watched in Brecknockshire for the interests of Richard. Humphrey Stafford, a kinsman of the duke's also, partly broke down the bridges, and cut up the roads, by which Buckingham could march into England; and had the other passes guarded by steady soldiers.¹²⁶ These were the effects of Richard's urgent commands. He never slept supine in any dangerous

¹²⁴ This letter was addressed to his chancellor, the bishop of Lincoln, ordering his great seal to be sent to him. Underneath this, the king wrote, with his own hand, 'We wolde most gladly ye came yourself, yf that ye may: and yf ye may not, we pray you not to fayle, but to accomlyshe, in al dylgencye, our sayde commaundemente, to sende our seale incontinent upon the syght hereof, as we trusste you, with such as ye trusste, and the officers parteyning to attende with hyt; praying you to ascerteyn us of your news ther. Here, loved be God, is al well, and trewly determyned; and for to resiste the malyse of hym that had best cause to be true, the duc of Buckingham, the most untrew creature lyvynge, whom, with God's grace, we shall not be long til that we wyll be in that parties, and subdue his malys. We assure you, there never was falser traitor purvayde for, as this berrer, Gloucestre, shall show you.'—¹²⁵ Kenuet Hist. 532, note.

¹²⁶ On 26 November. Rymer, v. 12. p. 203.

¹²⁷ Graft. 823. Hall, 393.

¹²⁷ Croyl. 568.

crisis. It was his temper, even to a fault, to act with immediate energy, and by the most forcible measures. He had all the marches of Wales, around the duke, so watched by trusty forces, that as soon as Buckingham should move from his castle, armed men should be ready to rush upon his possessions ; and, from the hope of sharing in their spoil, to obstruct his passage at every point. Hence, the Vaughans, on whom the duke looked from Brecon, in the interior of Wales, sprang out to patrol all the circumjacent country ; and with the other coinciding forces, by the destruction of the bridges, and taking possession of the difficult passes, drove him to dangerous fords, and to difficult and untried ways. Richard also sent men of war into the channel, to watch vigilantly the harbours on both its coasts ; and to prevent any from leaving England, or landing in it.¹²⁸

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

It was on the 24th of September that Buckingham had sent, from Brecon, his messengers to Richmond and Pembroke, in Bretagne, urging them to land in England, with the forces they could collect,¹²⁹ and to make the 18th of October the time of the invasion ; on which day, the duke promised to cause simultaneous insurrections in various counties. It is remarkable, that each of these two confederates exactly performed the allotted part. On the 18th of October, on which Richmond was to have sailed with his armament from Bretagne, Buckingham marched in open revolt from Brecon to Webly. By his excitation the marquis of Dorset rose in arms, at Exeter ; and other friends at Newbury, Maidstone, and Salisbury ; seconded by concurring insurgencies, on the 20th at Rochester, on the 22d at Gravesend,

¹²⁸ Croyl. 568. Graft. 825.

¹²⁹ Rolls Parl. 6, p. 245.

BOOK IV. and on the 25th at Guilford.¹²⁰ So that as far as decision, activity, and daring, could avail, there was no deficiency of either, in the duke and his associates. **REIGN OF RICH. III.** Richard, who on the 23d of October had reached Leicester, issued thence a proclamation against them.¹²¹ But the failure of this seemingly well-concerted and vigorously-commenced attempt, was so rapid, that on the next day a vice-constable of England was appointed to judge the rebels, without appeal, and whosoever he thought fit; but with the remarkable addition, to do it without noise or figure of judgment.¹²² Nothing could more strongly mark Richard's determined character and insensibility to human blood-shed, and yet dread of the popular eye, than this requisition: immediate execution, without delay, mercy, supplication, hesitation, or appeal; but as secret as arbitrary; in order that nothing might escape, that could excite public criticism, or touch the public sensibility.

The confederacy broke to pieces quickly, by the elements of nature contending against Buckingham. The duke, driven to bye roads and unguarded points, marched with his half-unwilling tenants thro the forest of Dean, towards Gloucester; meaning there to pass the Severn, and join the English insurrectionists. But a continual rain of ten days had so swollen the river, that it was then overflowing the country, and neither he could pass to his confederated friends, nor they advance to join him. Compelled thus to be stationary, his Welsh followers, wearied and disappointed, gradually deserted him. Neither prayers nor threats could keep them firm or

¹²⁰ Rolls Parl. 6. p. 245.

¹²¹ Rym. Fed. 12. p. 204.

¹²² Rym. Fed. 12. 205. ‘Sine strepitu et figura judicii.’

faithful. He was soon left with only his own household ; and he fled in despair to the house of one Ralph Banaster, at Shrewsbury, on whose fidelity he thought he could rely ; and where he meant to wait till the progress of his confederates gave a prospect of success ; or till he could obtain an opportunity of escaping to Richmond, in Bretagne.¹³³ By the unusual supply of provisions, superior to his host's ordinary fare, a concealed guest was suspected.¹³⁴ The proclamation, promising a large pecuniary reward, pursued him ;¹³⁵ and either tempted by this, or intimidated by his own danger, in sheltering a rebel, Banaster betrayed him to the sheriff of Shropshire. He was taken in a little grove near the house, dressed in a mean black cloak, and carried to Shrewsbury, where he was examined, and confessed all his plans ; as if he had expected some favor for thus betraying those who had allied themselves to his honor. He was conveyed thence to Salisbury, which the king had reached with a competent army.¹³⁶ The duke earnestly prayed for a personal interview with the king ; and it has been thought an instance of his implacable nature, that Richard would not give the friend, who had so greatly served him, this last consolation. It was a mark of the king's judgment, or at this moment, of his good fortune, that he refused to see him ; for it afterwards became known, that Buckingham requested the conference only, that he

CHAP.
VIII.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

¹³³ Graft. 824. Pol. V. 552. Hall, 394. ¹³⁴ Croyl. 568.

¹³⁵ The king offered 1000*l.* or 100*l.* a year, on the caption of Buckingham ; 1000 marcs for marquis Dorset ; the same for the bishop ; and 500 on the arrest of the others he named. 12 Rymer, 204.

¹³⁶ Graft. 825. Croyl. 568. Hall, 394. Richard, on the 21st of October, was at Melton Mowbray ; on the 23d, at Leicester ; on the 24th, at Coventry ; and on the 2d of November, at Salisbury. Harl. MSS. 120, 121, 131. Bucke, 529.

BOOK
IV.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

might spring upon him and stab him with a knife, which he had secretly prepared for that purpose.¹³⁷ No circumstance is more expressive of the duke's real character, than the deliberate meditation of this vindictive treachery. He was beheaded on the 2d November, on a new scaffold in the market place of Salisbury.¹³⁸ His treacherous dependant was rewarded;¹³⁹ and his splendid possessions, dignities, and emoluments, which induced many, from the hope of sharing, to hear of his rebellion with pleasure,¹⁴⁰ were seized by Richard's order, and some of them immediately distributed to the king's supporters.¹⁴¹

The earl of Richmond had performed his part with promptitude and intrepidity. He sailed on the 12th of October, with 5000 Breton soldiers, in fifteen vessels; but a storm immediately afterwards scattered the fleet. He was driven alone to the Dorset coast, near Pool. Troops appearing there, he resolved not to land until his fleet came up; but sent out, while waiting for it, a boat, to inquire if the men

¹³⁷ Grafton puts this as a possibility, 826. But the duke's son declared, that his father had made earnest suit to come into the presence of Richmond; and, if he had obtained his request, having a knife secretly about him, he would have thrust it into the body of king Richard, as he made semblance to kneel down before him. Herb. Hen. VIII. p. 110. The indictment against the son, which mentions this, charges him with having threatened to play the same part with Henry VIII. if he had been committed to the Tower. Such was the spirit of this family, and of the old nobility. The son perished by the axe, like his father.

¹³⁸ Graft. 826. Croyl. 568.

¹³⁹ The manor and lordship of Ealding, in Kent, 'late belonging to our great rebel and traitor, the duke of Buckingham,' were, on the 13th of December, given 'to our well-beloved servant, Rauf Banastre, squire, for taking and bringing of our said rebel into our hands.' Harl. MSS. p. 133.

¹⁴⁰ Croyl. 568.

¹⁴¹ The castle of Kymbolton was, on the same day Buckingham fell, given to lord Stanley. Harl. MSS. p. 120; and sir James Tyrrell, and Morgan Kidwelly, the king's attorney, were sent down, to enter all the duke's castles in Wales, and in the marches, and to seize all his goods. Harl. MSS. p. 121. Similar commissions were issued for other counties. p. 121-131.

at arms, whom he saw, were friends or enemies. The deceitful answer was, that they were stationed by Buckingham to receive him. Their manner exciting suspicion, Henry weighed anchor,¹⁴² and passed on to Plymouth.

CHAP.
VIII.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

Richard, perceiving that the main strength of the insurrections was in the western counties, marched his forces to Exeter. Intimidated by his approach, the bishop of Exeter, marquis Dorset, and other nobles, who had begun a revolt, hastened to disperse. They who could find ships, sailed to Bretagne ; others took refuge in sanctuaries ; but one sir Thomas St. Leger, whom Richard's sister, the duchess of Exeter, had chosen to marry, was taken. All entreaties, all offers of money, to save him, were in vain. Richard, resolved to impress terror by such an example, was inexorable ; and he suffered.¹⁴³ Some of those who rose in rebellion at Guildford were also executed ; and several of his household.¹⁴⁴ The pusillanimous confessions of Buckingham implicated many ; and made Richard feel it to be necessary to deter future disaffection by present severity. Altho in these punishments he did but what all governments enforce against deadly rebellion, yet they have occasioned him to be called cruel and tyrannous ; and the dislike which they excited, lessened his future safety. It is difficult for an endangered government to be mild, tho, perhaps, always politic. Mercy certainly attaches the heart, while fear alienates it : and Richard lived to find that nature tends to get rid of what she dreads.

¹⁴² Graft. 826. Pol. V. 553 Hall, 395-7.¹⁴³ Croyl. 569. The king was at Exeter on the 12th of November. Harl. MSS. 122.¹⁴⁴ Graft. 828. Pol. V. 554.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

While Richard paused at Exeter, Richmond, who still lingered in the channel, anchored in the bay of Plymouth, to explore the state and movement of his friends. He there heard of Buckingham's failure and death.¹⁴⁵ Sailing away, before he could be intercepted, he reached Vannes unharmed, where he met Dorset, and others; and several noblemen who rejoiced in his safety. They discussed their future measures; and on the ensuing Christmas-day, went, with great solemnity, to the chief church of the city, and pledged to each other their unshaken fidelity. Richmond took an oath to marry Elizabeth, immediately after he should acquire the English crown. They all did homage to him as their legal sovereign; and the prince applied to the duke of Bretagne, to enable him to land in England with a larger force; promising to repay him the expenditure. He received such favorable assurances, that he began to repair his vessels, and to provide the necessaries for an immediate descent.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ Croyl. 570.¹⁴⁶ Graft. 827. Pol. V. 554.

C H A P. IX.

RICHARD's Embassies to Bretagne—RICHMOND's Escape.
RICHARD's mental Agitations, and Repentance—Preparations to repel Invasion—The Queen's Daughters at his Court—His Son's Death—RICHMOND's Operations—Death of Queen ANNE.

THE eye of Richard was fixed on Bretagne, soon after his accession. His brother had been uneasy at the active and continually hostile Pembroke remaining there, with his nephew Richmond; and a restraint, as gently imposed as was consistent with security, watched and coerced them during Edward's life; who, before he died, had dispatched bishop Stillington to allure them into his power, or to procure them to be given up to him.¹

1483.

Richmond was not at first an object of much jealousy to Richard. The queen's relations were those whom he thought dangerous; and on the 13th of July, seven days after his coronation, he sent Dr. Hutton to Bretagne,² to ascertain whether the duke countenanced sir Edward Woodville and his followers; and if any enterprise on England was intended.³ But the plans of Buckingham to make Richmond king, and the actual sailing of the earl from Bretagne to invade him, directed his mind entirely to that country; and with his usual eagerness to forestall whatever danger threatened, he dispatched ambassadors to its duke, empowered to offer

¹ Grafton, 737.

² See his Instructions, in Harl. MSS. N° 433, p. 241.

I 12

³ Rym. Fœd. 197.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.
Rich-
mond's
danger.

the most lavish bribes to obtain possession of the person of his new competitor.⁴

The Breton sovereign was too much weakened by a malady, that affected his mental faculties, to be applied to on this occasion. But the mission was communicated to his treasurer and chief minister, Peter Landois ; and this man, being at variance with the nobility of the province, and wanting both money and support, thought Richard's friendship of importance to his interest ; and was preparing to fulfil his wishes, when, by some treachery in the king's cabinet, the negotiations were communicated to Morton in Flanders, " by his secret and sure friends." Urswick, the priest, who had managed the former treaty between the countess Margaret, her son, and Buckingham, was hurried off to apprise Richmond of his danger ; and to urge him to withdraw immediately into a French province. With that correctness, and sedate celerity of judgment, which was one of Richmond's endowments, he directed the priest to depart instantly, to intreat permission of the French king to reside in his dominions ; and mentioning to no one his intentions, sent his noble friends to pay a visit of inquiry after the duke's health, with a private hint to Pembroke to turn off from the road, to a town beyond the borders of Bretagne. Then mounting his horse, with five servants, as if to make a morning visit to an old friend in an adjoining village, he rode carelessly out of Vannes, mistrusted by no one. At five miles distance, he declined suddenly into a solitary wood that was near, put on the simple coat of a poor servant, whom he made the leader of his company ; and followed as an humble

⁴ Graft. 831. 2 Pol. Virg. 555.

CHAP.
IX.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

page, riding as fast as it was prudent, and stopping no where but to bait their horses.⁵

He was not missed till the fourth day after his departure ; when Landois, sending a band of soldiers, under a pretext of honoring him, but for the purpose of securing and of delivering him to Richard, discovered that he was gone. Couriers immediately hurried to every port, and horsemen to every road ; and such was the rapidity of their pursuit, and the exactness of their scent, that they arrived at the frontier within an hour after Richmond had passed it. Having been obliged to take unknown ways for secrecy, and having turned often into contrary directions, to mislead his expected pursuers, he had only preceded them by that short interval. They durst not commit violence within the territory of France ; and the earl got to Angiers, where Pembroke met, and exchanged the mutual congratulation.⁶

The reflecting mind may ask, was Richard happy on one of the noblest of the European thrones ? The wondrous moral arrangements of our social world ; and the corresponding organization of our material frame, forbade this expected result.⁷ He was not villain enough to be so. He came from a gentler stock ; and had a nobler mind, and had learnt a more cultivated sensibility. He had yielded to the alarm, the tempting policy, and the seducing sophistry of a vain-glorious and endangered hour ; and he destroyed his

Richard's
mental
agitations.⁵ Graft. 831. ⁶ Pol. Virg. 555. ⁷ Pol. Virg. 555. Hall, 402-4.

I remember two trials for murder, in which one culprit, who had killed his master in Clifford's Inn, declared, that while he was taking the body out, to throw it down the common sewer, all the buildings seemed to burst into flames as he passed them ; and another, who had destroyed his mother, never looked on a clock, at the hour he had done the crime, but he thought her face was in it, glaring upon him. There is a greater connexion between murder and remorse, than any other crime has exhibited.

BOOK
IV.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

innocent nephews; but their fate lessened none of the perils which environed him, and his reason began to regret its precipitation. He could not but remember what he had done. He felt its condemnation in his own secret heart. He read it in the countenances of many. He suspected it amid the compliments of all. He heard it with unsparing severity, from the reproaches of his adversaries. Hence, we may fully credit the probable account of sir Thomas More:—
 The rest of his brief life he “ spent in much pain and trouble outward; in much fear and anguish within. For I have heard by credible report, with such as were secret with his chamberers, that after this abominable deed done, he never had quiet in his mind; he never thought himself sure. Where he went abroad, his eyes whirled about; his body was privily fenced; his hand was ever on his dagger; his countenance and manner like one always ready to strike again. He took ill rest at nights, and lay long waking and musing. Sore wearied with care and watch, he rather slumbered than slept. Troubled with fearful dreams, sometimes he suddenly startled up, leaped out of his bed, and ran about the chamber. So was his restless heart continually tossed and tumbled, with the tedious impression and stormy remembrance of his abominable deed.”*

* More, p. 251. Richard is an instance of the existence and agency of that interior monitor, of which Juvenal so justly says,

‘ Cur tamen hos tu
Evasisse putas, quos, diri conscientia facti,
Mens habet attonitos, et surdo verbere credit,
Occultum quatiente animo tortore flagellum.’

Sal. 13. v. 192-6.

‘ But why must those be thought to 'scape, who feel
Those rods of scorpions, and those whips of steel,
Which conscience shakes, when she with rage controls,
And spreads amazing terror thro' their souls.’—Dryd.

CHAP.
IX.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

These perturbations seem to have agitated his mind while he was at Exeter. On his arrival in that city, the corporation presented him with a purse of 200 nobles. He received it graciously. Going out to survey the place, when he came to the castle, on hearing its name, some melancholy feelings, mingled with superstitious fancies, came over him. The castle was called Rougemont; and as it was pronounced, it brought to his recollection an idle prediction which had reached him, that he would be near his end whenever he came to Richmond. He allowed himself to be so shaken by the verbal similarity, as to exclaim, “I see my days will not be long.”⁹ His spirits must have been greatly depressed, to have been thus agitated by a simple sound. But from the visible indisposition of the gentry of Devon, he perceived that he had turned the hearts of the respectable classes against him. This may have dismayed him at this juncture; and it became his fortune to learn, that pomp and power, without attachment, are but shifting dreams of parade and alarm. Few miseries exceed those of an unpopular throne.

Having dispersed his enemies, he dismissed with great rewards his northern friends; and gradually disbanding his army, returned to London in December,¹⁰ and was received with cheering acclamations.

⁹ In those days, when astrology was so much in vogue, predictions of individual destiny abounded. Edward IV. was frequently troubled by the ominous prophecies of one Hogan. 2 Fenn, 138. and v. 5. In an official record, a man is styled ‘a nigromancer,’ as his profession. ‘Thomas Vandyke, late of Cambridge, nigromancer.’ Rolls Parl. 6. p. 273.

¹⁰ Croyl. 570. He was at Winchester on the 26th of November; (Harl. MSS. p. 127.) and reached London by the 1st of December, on which day he signed there a grant to the earl of Northumberland (who betrayed him) of the great estate of lord Powneys, who had fled to Richmond. Ib. p. 124.

BOOK
IV.
REIGN OF
RICH. III.
His repen-
tance.

At this period, he was externally surrounded with all that constitutes human glory. The wondering populace thought him fully blessed.¹¹ Comines remarks, that he was reigning in greater splendor and authority than any king of England for the last hundred years;¹² and he celebrated the Christmas festivity with profuse magnificence. Yet still the unseen worm of care tormented him. His busy spies brought him censorious remarks from those whom he dared not punish, and his spirit sank into sorrow and solitude. He found his name becoming used as a taunt of disgrace by many.¹³ The unfavorable incidents of nature or life, were imputed to him as the maledictions of heaven upon his reign; and he foresaw that his memory would be branded with infamy, for an action which he could neither obliterate nor recall. He repented of his criminal policy, and resolved to appease his internal anguish, and to restore his blemished character, by changing all that was wrong in his conduct, and by leading the life of a good man and of a deserving king. He strove to be just, mild, popular and generous, especially in his charities to the needy; and he endeavoured to reconcile himself to God and man. He began many useful public works. He founded at York a college for one hundred priests, which was then deemed one of the highest acts of human piety; and he listened with attention to the wise councils of his friends. But the historian who records this change, expresses his belief, that fear, not probity, thus improved him; and

¹¹ Vulgi admiratione beatus dicebatur. Pol. Virg. 548.

¹² Comin. 1. p. 514.

¹³ On the 11th of April 1484, he wrote to the magistrates of York, complaining of ‘the number of lies and contumelious speeches which were then spread abroad against him.’ Drake’s Ebor. p. 119.

intimates, that it neither lessened, nor averted the calamities that were doomed to fall upon him.¹⁴

CHAP.
IX.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

The violent seizure of the crown, and the destruction of Rivers, Hastings, and Buckingham, had not removed the difficulties by which Richard, from the first, had been surrounded. The leaders were gone; but the parties and the party-interests remained. His elevation combined them against him, but did not annihilate them. Hence, he still found himself on a tempestuous sea, which violence irritated, but could not calm. Yet, whatever policy could devise, he was active to execute. A fleet was ordered out under sir Thomas Wentworth, to watch the movement from Bretagne;¹⁵ and in January, a parliament assembled, which passed an act recapitulating his title and the former petition, and settling the crown upon himself, and his issue;¹⁶ and a subsidy was

Prepara-
tions
against
invasion.
1484.

¹⁴ We owe this account to Polydore Virgil, p. 548. The warrant for establishing the priests, is in the Harl. MSS. N° 433, p. 72.

¹⁵ See the commissions of the 18th and 20th of December 1483, in Harl. MS. p. 195. The cinque ports were also authorized to man out small ships to meet the Breton fleets. Ib. MS.

¹⁶ Parl. Rolls, v. 6. p. 240. The bishop of Lincoln, as chancellor, opened this parliament with a speech, which, by its abstract on the rolls, appears to me to be the same which is preserved in the MSS. in the British Museum, Vitell. E 10, p. 71; and in another copy, with some variations, in 139. It was spoken before Richard. ‘The head is our sovereign lord the king, *here present*.’ Its great object is, to exhort the peers to unity and peace. ‘Lords and noblemen! ye that have great substance to lose or save; in whose sure and concord demeaning rests the weal of all the commons: open your eyes! send out your faithful ears, and hear true and unfeigned reports.’ After reminding them of the many noble persons who had perished from bad counsel, he adds, ‘The most proper means to keep the great estates of the public body in their wealth and prosperity, is, for every one to hearken to others; so that, neither for supplantation, dissimulation, nor envy, the due proportion and harmony of this body be disturbed. By concord, as Sallust saith, small things grow to great: by discord, full great things fall to ruin and desolation: the cause why lords and noblemen ought to be more persuaded to accord, and each amicably to hearken.

‘Wherefore it is not to doubt, but that the rule and governale of the realm appeareth then in most temperance and moderation, when the king’s commissioners be obeyed at large, in every part of the land; so

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

1484.

granted for safe keeping of the sea. In the same month he issued commissions to all parts of the country, that all persons between sixteen and sixty should take an oath of allegiance to him.¹⁷ He had gunpowder and ammunition prepared.¹⁸ He purchased Spanish ships

that his highness, and his noble council, be not letted where the king listeth best to be, to intend the politic establishing of the realm.

'Give, then, your attendance, ye people that stand far off, to the lords and noblemen which be in authority. They come from the well-head.'

'I speak not to you, that now represent the whole, but to them that ye come from, whom, for their great and confused number and multitude, nature cannot well suffice to assemble in a place apt to the making of a law.'

He reminds them of the fable of the belly and its members; and asks, 'What is the belly, but the great public body of England? If, then, ye be single, and not turned to doubleness, all the body shall be fair and bright. And if the contrary; if, then, ye be wicked, the body shall be dark.' Another passage shows the anxiety of Richard, and his desire of intimidating others by Buckingham's fall. 'This womb of busy thought, care, and pensiveness, is waxed full great in the days that we be in, not only by the sudden departing of our old new-reconciled enemies from such treaties, oaths, and promises, as they made to this land; but also by marvellous abusions within, of such as ought to have remained the king's true and faithful subjects. It is too heavy to think and see what care and dangers by some one person, lately a right and great member of this body, many other noble members of the same, have been brought to. The example of his fall, and righteous punition, shold not be forgotten. Whoso taketh upon him, being a member under the head, with that to which his office and fidelity appertaineth not; setting the people into rebellion or commotion against the prince, be never so great or noble in his estate, he is, as it were, a rotten member of the body.' MSS. Vit. E 10. p. 141.

¹⁷ Harl. MSS. p. 141, 2. See the oath from one of the peers. Ib. p. 3.

¹⁸ There is an order 'to take all manner of stuff that shall be necessary, to enable John Bramburgh, *a stranger*, to make for us, certain great stuff of gunpowder,' dated 28 Jan. in Harl. MSS. p. 145. This order settles a question on which there has been hitherto some mistake. Mr. Lodge, in his remarks on a letter which he printed in his Illustrations, observing, that sir Richard Baker had asserted, that gunpowder was not manufactured here before Elizabeth; and that Dr. Watson had shown, from a passage in Hollingsworth, that it was made in England before 1552; adds, that it may be considered, from the letter he has published, that it was prepared here in 1509. His conjecture, so far, was right. But the order of Richard, quoted in the beginning of this note, proves, that this important invention of modern war was made in England in 1483, tho' a foreigner was the manufacturer of it here for king Richard III.

But I have no doubt that it was made in England as early as the reign of Edward III. in which it was first used; for in the account of the ex-

to add to his navy in the Channel;¹⁹ and extended its activity to resist French and Scots, as well as Bretons.²⁰ He bought and collected new artillery;²¹ and

CHAP.
IX.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

penditure of the ordnance office in the Tower at that period, in Harleian MSS. 5166, we have these articles;—

' The gonestone maker, 6d. a day	- - - - -	£. 9. 2. 6.
Saltpetre maker	- - - - -	9. 2. 6.
Gonnefounders two, fee to each 4d. a day, and room of gentlemen	- - - - -	18. 5. 0.'

Bree's cursory Sketch, p. 138.

This document shews, that we had here a maker of the shot for guns, which were then cut from stone, and founders of guns, and a saltpetre maker. This last person's occupation implies, that powder was made, because saltpetre is one of its chief ingredients. This supposition is confirmed by the patent of Richard II. the successor of Edward III. for in this, which bears date in the first year of his reign, the king orders Thomas Norwich, under the supervisal of Thomas Restwold, of London, 'to buy and provide two great and two less ingenia, vocata cannon; 600 stones for the same engines, and for other engines; 300 lbs. of saltpetre; 100 lbs. of sulphur of wine, and one doleum of carbonum de salugh; this last must be charcoal of willow, which we even now find to be the best kind of charcoal for gunpowder. We find an order issued for buying and providing, not actual gunpowder ready made, which foreign merchants might have imported; but the three materials from which gunpowder is now fabricated, saltpetre, sulphur, and charcoal; with the additional fact, that the sulphur used was that which is here called sulphur of wine, (*sulfuris vini*)—But yet here I pause on transcribing the word *vini*, which Bree, p. 139, has printed from Rymer, v. 7. p. 187; for I think it likely that the original word was *vivi*, and not *vini*, and therefore that it was common sulphur or brimstone (*sulfuris vivi*), and not sulphur of wine (*sulfuris vini*).

The patent 17 Edw. 3. dated 5 July 1334, mentions 200 stones for the king's engines, sculptured in the quarry of Folkstone, to be brought from Sandwich to the Tower of London. Rymer, 7. p. 77. This places cannon in England as early as 1334. The indenture for fortifying Jersey Castle, dated 13 Edw. 3. granting 30 tonneaux de pomadre with 50 quintals of iron and 2 of steel; and the Parliament Roll of 14 Ed. 3. mentioning 32 tonneaux de pomadre (Bree, p. 136, 7.) shew that cannon and powder were used in England in 1330 and 1331, for the defence of castles; as I cannot hesitate to concur with Mr. Bree in believing that pomadre is the term there used for gunpowder.

¹⁹ Harl. MSS. 146.²⁰ Ib. p. 151.

²¹ There is a warrant to pay 24*l.* for buying 20 new guns, and 2 serpentines; and an order to the constable of the Tower, to deliver out 8 serpentines upon carts; 28 haubusses, with their frames; 1 barrel of touch-powder; 2 barrels of serpentine powder; 200 bows; 400 sheafs of arrows; 10 gross of bow-strings; and 200 bills. Harl. MSS. p. 163 and 157. Another order commanded the delivery of 2 serpentines; 2 guns to lie on walls; 12 haubusses; 10 cross-bows of steel; 60 long bows; 100 sheafs of arrows, and 2 barrels of gunpowder. Ib. p. 178.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

1484:

vigorous directions were afterwards given to press soldiers, mariners, artificers, laborers, horses, waggons, and other things necessary for the king's use.²² The earl of Richmond was attainted,²³ and also his mother the countess; tho with some delicacies towards her husband lord Stanley.²⁴ The author of a contemporary pasquinade was executed.²⁵ An unfavorably predicting astronomer was sent to the Tower;²⁶ and such numerous proscriptions were made of other opposing men of rank and fortune, who would not submit to his government, that the monastic chronicler, the most impartial of those who mention him, compares them to the severities of the Roman triumvirate.²⁷ He distributed the rich forfeitures, which resulted from

²² Harl. MSS. p. 168. 178. 183. 195. The first commission, an early specimen of pressing, is to 'take mariners in the king's name, for the furnishing the ships, called the Andrew ; the Michael ; the Bastion ; and the Tyre ; to do service of war upon the sea, in the north part.'

²³ Parl. Rolls. 6, p. 244-6. Hall, 397.

²⁴ She was disabled from inheriting any lands or tenements; and all her castles, manors and lands were declared forfeited to the crown; but a life-interest in them was given to lord Stanley, with the reversion to the king. Ib. 250, 1; and see Hall, 398.

²⁵ This was Collingbourne, who is stated to have committed other treasons, had held some office in Wiltshire, important enough for a lord to hold after him. See Harl. MSS. N^o 433. p. 2.

²⁶ This was Louis Kaerlion, on 16th March 1484. In his table of the eclipses of the sun and moon he thus records the fact; 'Having lost the tables of those which I had made, by the pillage of king Richard, I, being imprisoned in the Tower of London, prepared other tables of eclipses, &c. which differ in a few things from those composed by me in 1482.' Tanner, Bib. Mon. p. 449.

²⁷ Croyland, 570. The king was not in the metropolis from the 6th of March 1484, to August 9th. On March 11th he was at Cambridge; from the 20th of March to the 25th of April, at Nottingham; on May the 1st, at York; on the 6th, at Middleham; on the 15th, at Durham; on the 22d, at Scarborough; on the 27th, at York; from the 30th to the 13th of June, at Pomfret; from the 14th to the 25th of June, at York; from the 30th to the 11th of July, at Scarborough; on the 20th and 21st, again at York; on the 23d, at Pomfret; on the 30th, at Nottingham; and on August the 9th and 10th, at Westminster; but the rest of the summer and autumn he passed at Nottingham, with a short excursion to Tutbury; and on November the 12th, returned to Westminster. Harl. MSS. 165. 195.

CHAP.
IX.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

these attainders and condemnations, among his northern adherents, on whom he placed, perhaps, too manifestly, his greatest reliance; and he planted these supporters in every part of his dominions, to the continual annoyance and discontent of the people among whom they resided. The presence, insults, and tyranny of these intruded masters, too sensible of their own importance, not to presume on impunity, increased the public desire for the return of their former and now exiled lords.²⁸ Thus the measures, which the king adopted for his security, turned, from the averting mind which they created, to his bane. Augmented dissatisfaction increased his jealousy and sternness ; and every punishment he inflicted, however merited by actual treason, raised the clamor of tyranny against him. It was thought, that he became extreme to mark what was done amiss. He may have been so, without intending it. Power in the hands of the irritable and the unquiet, is apt to be cruel, especially when goaded by danger; and Richard is loudly charged with being so. But the candid will observe, that it was towards those who revolted against him, that he is accused of displaying this temper. They chose to make it a battle of life or death with him; and he fought it as such. No benefits or overtures could allay their resentments: and as they were implacable, so he was unforgiving.²⁹

²⁸ Croyl. 570.

²⁹ Thus he attainted sir George Brown, sir Thomas Lewkner, sir John Gildford, and sir John Fogg; 13 esquires; 4 gentlemen, and other persons; but it was because they assembled a great multitude, arrayed in war, against him. So he attainted sir William Berkeley, sir Roger Tocot, Lord Sempster, sir Richard Woodville, two other knights, 100 esquires, and others; but they had assembled in arms against him, at Newbury, in Berks. He also attainted sir John Cheney, and 3 other knights, several esquires, gentlemen, and yeomen; but they had made a military insurrection at Salisbury; as sir Robert Willoughby, sir Thomas Arundel,

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.The
queen's
daughters
at his
court.

1484.

The project of uniting Richmond with one of the queen's daughters, he attempted by an altered behaviour to her to defeat. Whether he pitied her for the incurable wound he had inflicted, or obeyed merely the dictates of an interested policy; he endeavored to win her confidence, by his favors and kindnesses. He sent various friends to her, to conciliate her confidence. They performed their difficult task with zeal; and they persuaded her to forget all her wrongs, and to entrust her five daughters to the care of him and his queen, to form a part of his court, and to be educated under his care. The dowager queen has been violently censured for this acquiescence. It was certainly breaking her engagements with Richmond's friends; but at this moment his cause seemed hopeless; and she may have thought, that she had only to choose between immuring five young ladies, the eldest but seventeen, for life in a sanctuary; or permitting them to receive that princely education which her maternal affection desired. As no friend has explained her motives, she has found no advocate: but has been held up as an instance of female versatility and weakness. Her conduct may be so considered; but it is also possible, that the entreaties, as well as the benefit of her own children, may have persuaded her to a reconciliation with the king. Whoever has to decide and act, amid contradicting feelings and duties, must seem to act objectionably, whichever course may be adopted.

Richard, before the peers of the realm and the city

six esquires, and several gentlemen, with marquis Dorset, and sir Thomas St. Leger, had done at Exeter. As all these were declared traitors, their lands and goods were confiscated; and an act was passed, enabling him to grant their lands to others. Parl. Rolls, 6. p. 246, 9. All these voluntarily dared the deadly chance, and aimed at his life and crown.

magistrates, bound himself by a solemn oath, to protect, maintain, advance, and marry them;²⁰ and they had no reason to be dissatisfied with exchanging a cloister for a palace. The king and queen conveyed them to their court, with studied honors; and by familiar and affectionate entertainments, strove to make them forget all former evil.²¹ The most criminal intentions in Richard have been ascribed to this measure; and yet the kindest uncle could not have acted otherwise. There was, indeed, an unworthy jealousy of power, in not calling them princesses in his oath, and in the idea of marrying them as private gentle-women merely; but a regard for national tranquillity, and still more, for the safety of his son's future succession, probably dictated this conduct, which may have been most favorable to their happiness, and to the country's welfare. Richard prevailed on their royal mother to solicit her son Dorset to concur in the family conciliation.

CHAP.
IX.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

²⁰ The Harleian MS. has preserved this oath: ‘ I, Richard, king of England, &c. in the presence of you, my lords spiritual and temporal, and you, mayor and aldermen of my city of London, promise and swear (verbo regio) upon these holy Evangelists of God, by me personally touched, that if the daughters of dame Elizabeth Gray, late calling herself queen of England; to wit, Elizabeth, Cecil, Anne, Katteryn, and Brugget, will come unto me out of the sanctuary of Westminster, and be mynded, ruled, and demeased after me, then I shall see that they shall be in surety of their lives; and also not suffer any manner of hurt, by any manner person or persons to them or any of them, in their bodies or persons, to be done by way of ravishing or defiling contrary to their wills; nor them, nor any of them, imprison within the Tower of London, or other prison.

‘ But that I shall put them in honest place of good name and fame, and them honestly and courteously shall see to be found and entreated: and to have all things requisite and necessary for their exhibition and finding, as my kinswomen.

‘ And that I shall do marry such of them as now ben marriable to gentilmen born, and everiche of them give in marriage, lands and tene-
ments to the yearly value of 200 marcs for the term of their lives.’
MS. p. 308.

²¹ Grafton, 836. Hull, 407.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.His son's
death.

1484.

While Richard was thus exerting himself to suppress and disappoint internal conspiracy, and to prevent invasion, he was destined to receive the first great retributive blow from the unseen direction of events, in the loss of his only son. After adding the princesses to his household, he assembled the principal persons of his kingdom, in February 1484, and caused them to swear adherence and fidelity to his son, Edward prince of Wales.³² Within two months after he had thus secured, as he supposed, the succession to his own line, this prince was attacked with a rapid illness at Middleham castle, which soon ended in his death. Richard and his queen received the tidings at Nottingham, and were both nearly distracted with the intelligence.³³ His unsparing ambition was thus frustrated in its fondest hope. His parental feelings were pure and kind, and his sufferings were proportionately acute.

But the growing dangers of his situation roused him from his grief. He discovered, that Morton and the exiled nobility were not only in alliance with Richmond, but were in active correspondence with the chief persons in England. He spread every where his inquiring spies, both at home and abroad. He adopted an invention of Edward IV. of stationing horsemen on the roads, at every twenty miles, who should transmit to each other the letters that were to be forwarded; by which plan all news travelled 200 miles in two days.³⁴ His navy was alert:

³² Croyl. 570.

³³ ‘Pene insanire,’ Croyl. 571. The prince died 9th April 1484. By the grants in the Harl. MS. the king appears to have been at Nottingham, from 20th March to 25th April in this year. On 1st May he went to York, and on the 6th to Middleham, where his child had expired. MS. ib. 166–173.

³⁴ Croyl. 571.

successful against the Scots; but suffering some losses from the French.²⁵

On arriving at Angiers, the earl of Richmond found the French king's permission to reside in France; and went in person to Charles, at Langeais on the Loire, to explain the reason of his sudden escape, and to solicit his aid against Richard. Charles VIII. received him kindly, and took him to Montargis, with his friends, and afterwards to Paris, which then became the resort of all those who chose to embark in his meditated enterprise. His flight from Vannes had stopped all his preparations from Bretagne. The duke, recovering his recollection, disapproved of what his minister had done; and assisted the gentlemen who had been left behind, with money, to join their prince.²⁶ But he gave no further countenance to Henry; and concluded a truce with Richard's envoys,²⁷ which was afterwards prolonged,²⁸ and converted into such a friendly alliance, that Richard sent 1000 archers to assist him against France.²⁹ Charles VIII. flattered Richmond with promises of succors, but delayed providing them. Yet his countenance gave new courage to the exiled

REIGN OF
RICH. III.
Rich-
mond's
operations.

²⁵ Croyl. 571. He bought ships from Spain in January, to make war on Bretagne; and in February ordered fleets to be victualled against France, Bretagne, and Scotland. Harl. MS. 146-151. In March he issued fresh warrants to impress mariners, (ib. 168.) which, in June, were sent to all mayors, &c. p. 180. The French took some of his ships off Scarborough, with two 'ferocissimis capitaneis,' (ib.) one of them the person who had commanded the fortifications at Westminster Abbey; John Nessfield.

²⁶ Graft. 834. Pol. V. 556. Hall, 405.

²⁷ 12 Rym. 226. The first truce was from 1 July 1484 to 24 April 1485.

²⁸ 12 Rym. 255. The Harl. MS. has a license for Thomas Hoton, to go with twelve persons to Bretagne, on the king's message, dated 23 October 1484. p. 192.

²⁹ The commission to John Gray, to command there, was dated 28 June 1484. 12 Rym. Fed. 226, 7. On 7 March following, the truce was prolonged to Michaelmas 1492. ib. 261.

BOOK IV. revolters, and induced others to join their party.

REIGN OF RICH. III. Among these were sir James Blunt, the governor of Hammes, and sir John Fortescue, one of the officers of Calais. Blunt released his prisoner, the earl of Oxford, who immediately went to Richmond. No circumstance more pleased or benefited Henry, than the presence of this nobleman. He was the highest rank that had yet openly allied with him. His reputation was great and unsullied. His abilities and experience in war, were important to the wise direction of his intended expedition. Above all, he found him to be one in whom, above all others, he might securely place his most secret trust.⁴⁰ Thus supported, the day of his good fortune began to dawn with a serene brightness, that gradually made the ardor of his hope the just confidence of reason.

Richard, finding his intercepting plans defeated by his rival's flight into France, endeavored to make the present solicitations to Charles, the evidence of an anti-national spirit. He published a proclamation against Richmond and his adherents, charging his grandfather, Owen Tudor, with illegitimacy; and accusing him of having covenanted with the king of France, to abandon all claims of England to Normandy, Anjou, Maine, Gascony, Guienne, Calais, Guynes, and the Marches; and arraigning him for giving away already archbishoprics, bishoprics, and other clerical dignities, and also dukedoms, earldoms, and baronies.⁴¹ Richmond, with great spirit, retorted by an energetic letter to all his friends and allies; in which he announced his intention of dethroning the

⁴⁰ Graft. 834. Hall, 405.

⁴¹ Fenn has printed this proclamation, v. 2. p. 321, 3. It is dated 23 June 1484.

king, whom he calls an homicide, and unnatural tyrant.⁴² Increasing resentment was now extinguishing all the former parties that had shaken the country, and dividing it into two new ones, the opposers, and the supporters of the king ; and Richmond becoming identified with the former, the future struggles assumed a personal character ; and the only question that was fought for at last, was, whether Richard or Henry should be seated on the English throne. Every month additional numbers of the nobility and gentry shewed their desire to place a new dynasty upon it.

CHAP.
IX.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

To secure his northern frontier from the incursions of Scotland, that he might have his forces undivided to act against Richmond, the king opened a negotiation with the Scottish monarch ; and proposed a marriage between that king's son and his own niece. James was in need of friends, as well as himself, and sent his ambassadors to Nottingham. The prelate of the north made the flattering speech to Richard already noticed ;⁴³ and a treaty of friendship and alli-

⁴² It was this.—‘ H. R.—Right trusty, worshipful and honorable good friends, and our allies ;

‘ I greet ye well. Being given to understand your good devoirs, and intent to advance me to the furtherance of my rightful claim due, and lineal inheritance of the crown, and for the just depriving of that homicide and unnatural tyrant, which now unjustly bears dominion over you, I give you to understand, that no christian heart can be more full of joy and gladness than the heart of me, your poor exiled friend ; who will, upon the instance of your suue advertyzing what power you will make ready, and what captains and leaders you get to conduct, be prepared to pass over the sea, with such force as my friends here are preparing for me ; and if I have such good speed and success as I wish, according to your desire, I shall ever be most forward to remember, and wholly to re-quite this great and most loving kindness in my just quarrel. ‘ H. R.’

‘ I pray you to give credence to the messenger of what he shall impart to you.’ Harl. MS. N° 787.

This has been printed by Mr. J. Nicholls, in his additions to Hutton’s Bosworth Field, p. 190.

Bucke has inserted it in his History, 1 Kennet, p. 572. The Scotch commission to treat on the marriage, is dated 30 August, at Edinburgh. 12 Rym. 232.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

1484.

ance having ensured safety to the border provinces,⁴⁴ the king returned to the metropolis in November,⁴⁵ which, excepting a short time in August, he had not visited since the preceding winter.⁴⁶ In the next month, he sent his mandate to the mayor of Windsor, complaining, that his rebels and traitors were confederated with his ancient enemies of France; and were sending over writings with false inventions, tidings, and rumors, to provoke discord and division between him and his lords; and commanding him to inquire after the utterers of such papers; to commit them to sure ward, and to proceed to their sharp punishment as an example to deter others.⁴⁷ Some days afterwards, he ordered the commissioners he had sent into the counties near the metropolis, to call before them, in all haste, the knights, squires, and gentlemen; to understand from them what number of men, defensibly arrayed, they could bring together, on half a day's notice, in case of any sudden arrival of his enemies.⁴⁸ Thus no precaution, which enlightened prudence could suggest, was omitted by this active-minded king.

He kept his Christmas at Westminster, with his accustomed display of state; and appeared on the Epiphany with the crown on his head at a royal banquet; but it was remarked, that the princess Elizabeth was dressed in splendid robes of the same form and color with his queen's; and inferences began to be made that he meditated his consort's death or

⁴⁴ Graft. 830. See the articles agreed on, in Hall, 398-400.

⁴⁵ Croyl. 571.

⁴⁶ See before, note 27.

⁴⁷ It is dated 6 Dec. 1484. Harl. MSS. N° 787, p. 2; and Nicholl's Hutton, p. 191.

⁴⁸ Harl. MSS. N° 433, p. 198. This letter was dated 18 December, and sent to Surrey, Middlesex, Hertford, &c.

divorce.⁴⁰ What he had done, created the worst opinions of what he meant to do. Selfish ambition, without either moral or religious principle, being believed to be the guide of his conduct, no crime seemed unlikely, no imputation unjust.

In the midst of his splendid entertainment, tidings were suddenly brought to him, that Richmond would certainly invade him in the following summer. His natural intrepidity and love of decision, occasioned him to receive the news with delight,⁴¹ that the deciding battle might speedily occur: so little can we penetrate the mysterious future.

As his last winter passed on, his queen Anne became unwell. He is admitted to have been at this time acting the part of a good and well-disposed king:⁴² and to have been afraid lest her sudden death should lessen the creditable opinion that was forming of him. Yet he is charged with proceeding to kill her, by abstaining from her society; by complaining to his nobles, and especially to archbishop Rotheram; of her sterility; and by spreading a rumor, meant to reach her ears, that she was actually dead.⁴³ This mode of killing her is not very probable; and is refuted by the inconsistent addition, that when she went sorrowingly to him, to ask why she was to die; he answered her with fair words, and dissembling blandishments; kissed her, and comforted her, and bid her be of good cheer.⁴⁴ This soothing kindness was the true behavior of an affectionate husband; and was the reverse of that which he would have exhi-

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

Death of
queen
Anne.

⁴⁰ Croyl. 571.

⁴¹ Ib.

⁴² Or, as the hostile chroniclers express it, he had begun 'to counterfeit the ymage of a good and well-disposed person.' Graft. 836. Hall, 407.

⁴³ Hall, 407.

⁴⁴ Ib. 'Osculando,' adds Pol. Virg. 557.

BOOK IV. bited, if he had meant to injure her by his asserted alienation. The two parts of the story do not coincide; and therefore, when these writers offer us the consequential alternative, that “either from grief, or poison, she died in a few days,”⁵⁴ we may be allowed to decline the proposed dilemma altogether; and to suppose that nature or providence had withdrawn her, like her son, into the grave, and with no friendly hand to Richard; for as her death ensured the public belief, that it was either another penal judgment, or another murder, no event could be more calamitous to him than to lose her, with the certainty of such destroying imputations.

**SECTION OF
RICH. III.
1484.**

There is a correctness in all the accounts of the Croyland doctor, when they can be compared with the records, and other manuscript authorities,⁵⁵ that induces us to take his representation as the unprejudiced truth. He remarks, that “the similarity of the dresses of queen Anne and Elizabeth, in the Christmas festivities, created great surprise; and that it was said by many, that the king, either expecting the queen’s death, or meditating a divorce, for which he thought he had sufficient reasons, was applying his mind to a marriage with the princess.” He adds, that it did not seem to Richard, that his kingdom would be confirmed to him, or the hope of his competitor taken away, by any other measure.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Hall, 407.

⁵⁵ He ends his valuable History by saying, that he finished it on 30 April 1486, p. 578. He did not continue it further, because that would concern the actions of living persons, and would expose the historian either to hatred, if he described their vices, or to the crime of flattery, if he blazoned their virtues. Ib. 577. I understand him to say, that he wrote his little work in ten days. 578.

⁵⁶ Croyl. 572. The instances of Henry VIII. Napoleon, and other sovereigns, divorcing their wives, because they wished an heir to their thrones, prove, that Richard might have had that desire, altho improper,

He proceeds, “ A few days after this, the queen began to be exceedingly ill. Her sickness was thought to increase more rapidly, because he entirely abstained from her connubial society ; and thus, as he was advised by the physicians, he judged he ought to do.”⁵⁷ Why should I add more ? About the middle of the following March, on the day of the great eclipse of the sun, which then occurred, queen Anne died ; and was buried at Westminster, with no less honor than became a queen.”⁵⁸

Here is no charge of poison or cruelty ; nor can an illness, beginning a few days after Twelfth-day, and lasting till the middle of March, above two months, be fairly attributable to poison, unless no one becomes ill in winter without it. His secession from her is not ascribed to wicked design, but to medical advice. His projecting an union with another lady, before her death, tho an act neither decorous nor consistent with true affection, nor morally vindicable from the consequences to which it may lead, is an action which has been done, and a subsequent marriage completed, shortly after the wife’s death, in violation of the feelings, which society rightly chooses to exact and to make sacred, by many persons of great general respectability, without their being deemed murderers or tyrants. But Richard has not been allowed to do any thing in common with the rest of

without being a flagitious character. That there was some informality about this marriage, which made a divorce attainable, is probable, because the act of parliament that settled her inheritance, in 1474, contemplated a divorce as a possible occurrence. See before, p. 379.

⁵⁷ So I construe the doctor’s awkward Latin sentence. ‘ Itaque a medicis sibi consultum, ut faceret, judicavit.’ p. 572. If my construction be right, his avoidance of her society was in obedience to the injunction of her medical attendants.

⁵⁸ Croyl. 572. It is elsewhere stated, that she died 11 March 1485.

BOOK IV. mankind, without the ascription of some horrible motive. His mind has been supposed to have been in an universal and continual moral leprosy.

REIGN OF RICH. III.

1485.

But another person has been implicated in this event, to her disadvantage. Bucke declares, that there was an autograph letter from the princess Elizabeth to the duke of Norfolk, in the cabinet of Thomas earl of Arundel and Surrey, in which she tells his grace, that he was the man in whom she affied, in respect of that love her father had ever bore him. After congratulating, as Bucke terms it, his many courtesies, she desires him, in continuation of them, to be a mediator for her to the king, in behalf of the marriage propounded between them. She adds, that he, the king, was her only joy and maker in this world, and that she was his in heart and thought; and she insinuates, that the better part of February was past, and that she feared the queen would never die.⁵⁹

As it would be absurd to reason against a genuine autograph, it need only be added, that to apply to the duke of Norfolk, to be a mediator with the king, to urge her marriage to him, looks as if it had been proposed by others, not by himself, and that he was pausing and doubting about it. To exculpate the princess is impossible, unless the letter be a forgery; but it will be equitable to her to remember, that she was but nineteen years old.⁶⁰ If it were genuine, the impatient forwardness of the lady made Richard in greater danger of being the seduced than the seducer.

⁵⁹ Bucke says, ‘ All these be her own words, written with her own hand, and this is the sum of her letter, which remains, under her own hand, in the magnificent cabinet of Thomas earl of Arundel and Surrey.’ p. 568. But he has given the substance, not a copy, of the letter; and this omission, in such an important document, is a matter of great mistrust. ⁶⁰ She was born the 11th of February 1465. Graft. 668.

The supposition of such a marriage becoming public, a general murmur arose against it, which the king's most faithful counsellors thought it unwise to brave. Ratcliffe and Catesby firmly resisted the project; and told Richard, that if he did not unhesitatingly contradict it, even his northern friends would rebel against him. No one could endure an incestuous marriage between an uncle and his niece. Twelve doctors in theology also gave their opinion, that the Pope could not legalize it by any dispensation. The world would not give his ministers the credit of disinterested probity on this occasion. Their reasoning and feelings were just; but it was believed that their real motive was, a fear that Elizabeth might gain the king's affection, and govern his mind, and then revenge the death of her own uncle, lord Rivers, on those who had recommended it. Richard listened to their counsels; and a little before Easter, in the great hall of St. John's Priory, Clerkenwell, before the mayor and corporation of London, in a clear and loud voice, solemnly disavowed the imputed intention.⁶¹

The death of the queen greatly diminished Richard's interest in the hearts of the country; and as the will obeys the feeling, the loss of moral influence is the loss of actual power. The abandonment and denial of his intended marriage with Elizabeth, did not avert the disgust at its believed conception. It was assumed that he had meant it; and that fear of the consequences alone prevented him from adding a

⁶¹ Croyl. 572. He adds, that 'many thought he obeyed the wishes of his advisers rather than his own.' Richard shews the consequences of once getting a bad character. Few would afterwards give him credit for any right action. This hostile propensity of mankind has driven many to utter wickedness and ruin. Though every one feels his own spots to be removable, no one will believe another's to be so.

BOOK IV. moral sin to his great suspected crime. Hence, he began the fatal year of 1485 with a diminution of his own safety, by the very measures which human calculation had supposed would most firmly consolidate it. Such will be the issue of all policy that is not founded on moral rectitude. Richard too easily confounded the gaining of a present point, with its permanent advantage; and did not see, that the success we exult in is often the benefit which leads to our discomfiture.

REIGN OF RICH. III.
1485.

Yet, altho there was much that menaced, still no tangible danger was near. A military force moved every where promptly at his command, which promised to make Richmond's invasion an absurdity. No enemy was any where in force. All rebellion was overawed, the discontented driven away, and silent obedience pervaded the island. Individual noblemen and gentlemen frequently passed over to Henry; ^{as} but their absence from England lessened the chances of internal revolt; and the speedy recovery of Hammes, which its governor, on releasing Oxford, had surrendered to Richmond's friends, elated the king's mind, as an omen of his final triumph.^{as} This exultation was completed, when he heard that Charles VIII. meant to give his threatening invaders but a slender assistance. He procured certain intelligence that they meant to attempt a landing; but could not learn that any part was fixed on. To guard every point, he went himself, about Whitsuntide, into the northern counties,^{as} and more com-

^{as} Fab. 518. Hall, 407. One of these, who joined Richmond, was Fox, a priest of great understanding and learning, whom the prince immediately attached to his secret councils, and made him afterwards bishop of Winchester. Graft. 835. ^{as} Hall, 408.

^{as} Croyl. 573. From the Harl. MSS. N° 433, it appears, that ex-

pletely to baffle their projects, and to keep the minds of the country from any uncertainty as to the succession, he had the earl of Lincoln, his most beloved sister's son, declared to be his heir apparent.⁶⁵

It was no loss to society that Buckingham failed and fell. He was not the man to regenerate the nobility of England, or to plant moral principles on its throne. Yet, altho he perished, neither lamented nor unmeritingly, it was he that wove the plans and made the cords, which pulled down Richard from his state. His death left them broken and scattered ; but in his few weeks of activity he had so ably organized his confederations, created so much mutual confidence, and established such an unity of heart and hand, that as soon as a superior character, and a more principled mind, appeared, to re-assume their direction, all their spirit revived, and their combinations were renewed ; and Richmond, with the aid of his mother, Morton and Stanley, was enabled at last to execute what Buckingham, with such a master intellect, had sketched.

Yielding to his mother's representations of Richard's altered conduct towards her family, the marquis of Dorset endeavored to escape from his co-exiles at Paris, and to join her family in the English court. He left the French capital secretly at night, and travelled with great expedition toward Flanders ; but his departure became known to Richmond, who obtained the French king's authority to arrest him. He was overtaken at Compeigne, and carried back to Paris.⁶⁶

cepting three short residences at Windsor, he continued in London and Westminster from the beginning of the year 1485 to the middle of May. On June the 1st he was at Coventry ; on the 6th, at Kenilworth ; and, on the 22d, at Nottingham. p. 200-219.

⁶⁵ Holinshed, 747.

⁶⁶ Graft. 840. Hall, 409.

CHAP.
IX.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

1485.

The information that Richard intended to marry Elizabeth, made Henry despair of uniting himself with the line of York; and he turned his thoughts to an alliance with one of the powerful Welsh families.⁷⁷ But this desertion of Dorset, having alarmed him for the stability of his other friends, he decided on attempting his enterprise without delay; and, therefore, obtaining a small force, and borrowing some money from the French king, for which he left Dorset and sir John Bourchier as hostages, he went to Rouen, collected his friends, and prepared with celerity a little fleet at Harfleur, to sail as soon as it was ready.⁷⁸

One of Richard's wisest actions had been, to have a statute passed, declaring illegal the forced loans called Benevolences,⁷⁹ which his brother had, with such great unpopularity, exacted. But his expensive state, his lavish liberalities to his friends, his repeated preparations against his enemies, and his wary guarding and fortifying every accessible point of landing, and every place of danger in the interior, had so exhausted the royal treasury and its ordinary supplies, that the king allowed himself to have recourse to the very measure, which he had pleased the country by condemning and abrogating. He revived what he had annulled, and compelled his wealthy subjects to give him the sums for which he arbitrarily taxed them, under the same fictitious name of a Benevolence. This measure struck a fatal blow at what remained of his popularity. The hope and experienced benefit of a good government might have yet preserved him; but, when his subjects found their pro-

⁷⁷ Graft. 840.⁷⁸ Stat. of Realm, 2, p. 478.⁷⁹ Ib. 840.

perty attacked by his despotic will, a spirit of indifference in some, of resentment in others, arose against him, which paralyzed those exertions in his favor, when the last great crisis came upon him.⁷⁰

CHAP.
IX.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

The rumors, that Henry's preparations for his invasion were advancing to maturity, increasing every day, Richard tried, in vain, by all his secret agents, to ascertain in what part he meant to land.⁷¹ Baffled by Richmond's secrecy, or inability to select out the safest place, he stationed lord Lovel at Southampton, to watch, with his fleet, all the coasts of the southern counties; and with orders to assemble all the forces in his neighbourhood, and to attack his enemies as soon as they had disembarked. He was so sure that the attempt would be in these parts of England; that a large portion of his resources was expended⁷² there, in providing the means of effectual and instantaneous resistance. Having thus, as he believed, averted danger from its most probable and accessible points of entrance, he went west to Kenilworth castle, in the beginning of June; and towards the latter end of the month, stationed himself at Nottingham;⁷³ a safe and central point, from which he could himself move to any part of the kingdom that should demand his immediate presence. He passed his July in a state of royal enjoyment, without any prospect or dread of the

⁷⁰ The Harl. MSS. N° 433, p. 275, 8, contains the letters sent by the king, exacting these benevolences, and mentioning the sum which each person, secular or religious, was required to give. On the great unpopularity of these exactions, see the strong language of Croyland, p. 571, 2. Fabian says, the least sum that he borrowed of any one in London, was 40*l.* Yet he adds, that to these he delivered good and sufficient pledges. His want of money appears, from the warrants in the Harl. MSS. for the pledging and sale of his plate.

⁷¹ Croyl. 572.

⁷² Ib. 573.

⁷³ Harl. MSS. N° 433, p. 218, 219. From Nottingham, on the 22d of June, he issued letters to the commissioners of array, in every county, to muster his subjects in arms. Ib. p. 220.

**BOOK
IV.**

**REIGN OF
RICH. III.
1485.**

tempest, which, from its imperceptible distance, was on the wing to overwhelm him.

It was one of his severest calamities, and the immediate cause of his destruction, that some of those in whom he most confided and employed, and whom he had most bounteously enriched, treacherously engaged, even while in his service, in the conspiracy against him. One of these was Morgan Kidwelly, his attorney-general.⁷⁴ This perfidious law officer, of his confidential council, sent Richmond secret word, that sir Rice ap Thomas, who watched for Richard, with a commanding influence and high character, in Wales, and whose zealous hostility would have frustrated all invasion there, would apply to his assistance the great preparations he was ostensibly making against him; and that sir John Savage, who controlled Cheshire for the king, was equally favorable. He added, that Bray had collected money enough to supply his troops in their movements; and he recommended him to take his course directly into Wales.⁷⁵ To this intelligence Henry owed his success, and Richard his downfall. He had been before so undecided himself where to land, that his own uncertainty, in addition to his judicious secrecy, had baffled Richard's inquisitorial penetration. This advice determined the earl to sail immediately to Wales; and, by thus avoiding every part which Richard had sufficiently and sedulously guarded with his most faithful forces, and by entering the island at the quarter where he was least

⁷⁴ His appointment of attorney-general to Richard, is in the Harl. MSS. N^o 433, p. 79; and there are several grants to him in it, as the stewardship of all the lordships in the duchies of Lancaster and Dorset. Ib. 49; several manors, p. 63, &c.

⁷⁵ Graft. 841. Pol. Virg. 559. Hall, 410. Richard had given Bray a general pardon. Harl. MSS. p. 34.

expected, he was enabled to turn all the king's preparations in the rear; and to be in the heart of England, before Richard could gain correct certainty that he had reached it. There must have been traitors in Richard's cabinet, for his rival to have been thus directed to take the fittest measures for success, with such exact precision and unchecked results.⁷⁶

Richmond sailed from Harfleur with a petty force of 2000 men, in a few vessels; and in seven days, reaching Milford Haven on the 1st of August, he debarked at Dalle, and marched the next dawn to Haverfordwest, where, as the grandson of a descendant of Brutus, Beli, Arthur, and Cadwallader, and as coming to place a dynasty of ancient British ancestry on the throne of England, which had been so long held from it by Saxon and Norman intruders, he was cheerfully received.⁷⁷ His landing and march were so secret and rapid, that the inhabitants, till they saw him, did not know that he had arrived.⁷⁸

At first, he was disappointed to hear, that both Rice ap Thomas and Savage meant to attack him. He marched immediately northward to Cardigan. Fresh tidings occurred there to dismay him, that sir Walter Herbert, on whose friendship he had calculated, was

⁷⁶ The taking the great seal from the bishop of Lincoln, on the 1st of August 1485, looks like a suspicion or discovery of some infidelity in him. Rym. 12. p. 271, 2. The billet afterwards thrown on the duke of Norfolk's tent,

‘ Jack of Norfolk, be not too bold,
For Dickon thy master is *bought and sold*,’

explicitly indicated the treason, and warned him to avoid its inevitable consequences. Graft. 850. Savage, Hungerford, and Bourchier, were in the near and confidential stations of knights of his body.

⁷⁷ Croyl. 573. Pol. Virg. 560. Graft. 841.

⁷⁸ Graft. ib. He received assurances of service from Pembroke; yet Richard had confirmed their privileges, and added new grants. Harl. MS. p. 100. Sir William Stanley had been appointed constable, and captain of Carnarvon. Harl. MS. 445.

CHAP.
IX.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

BOOK IV. collecting a force at Carmarthien to arrest his progress. These accounts alarmed his little army; but retreat was impossible; desperate courage was their only safety; and each man assayed his armor, and sharpened his weapons, to sell their lives dearly. In this state of apprehension, Richmond sent out horsemen to explore; and while they were collecting intelligence, the arrival of two Welsh gentlemen of eminence, tho with small numbers, recovered his spirit from the dismay of unsuccored destitution. His men returned with information, that Rice and Herbert were in harness before him, ready to encounter him, and stop his passage.⁷⁹

But it was on the Stanleys, and his English friends, that he mainly relied; and to reach them before Richard's eagle eye, and certain rapidity of movement, the hour his path was known, could intercept him, was his only chance and hope. To effect this, and yet to conceal his line of march, he proceeded, without resting, over the mountain passes, and by the least frequented tracks, and thro the most unpeopled districts, attacking, without hesitation, and surprising with ease, all the defended posts that were in his way, direct into Shropshire; sending also off trusty messengers, as he moved, to his mother, lord Stanley, and sir Gilbert Talbot, uncle of earl Shrewsbury, to apprise them of his coming; and intimating the time when he should pass the Severn at Shrewsbury, with the intention of advancing immediately to

⁷⁹ Graft. 841, 2. Pol. V. 560. Hall, 411. Mr. Pennant mentions a Welsh tradition, that while Henry was at Tremostyn, in Flintshire, about dinner time, a party attached to Richard arrived, with intent to apprehend him; but, with the assistance of the family, he leaped out of a back window, and escaped thro a hole, which is still called The King's Hole. Penn. Tour.

CHAP.
IX.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

London.⁸⁰ As he approached this town, he was gratified to see the dreaded Rice ap Thomas marching peacefully to join him. He had determined this hesitating Welshman to desert Richard, by promising, two days before, to make him the chief governor of Wales.⁸¹ Thus assured that he should lose nothing by his change of sides, the prudent sir Rice, whom his Welsh encomiasts transform into an ancient hero, with that easy painting of verbal bombast, which caricatures while it labors to extol,⁸² betrayed the trust committed to him by his king; and in violation of his sworn allegiance, of his own written promise,⁸³ “heading a goodly company,” he marched with his enemy to dethrone him. But gentlemanly perjury was the fashion of the day, in all that concerned loyalty, from the king himself to the poorest

⁸⁰ Graft. 842. Pol. V. 560. Hall, 411.⁸¹ Ib. Ib.

⁸² The author of his *Life*, written in the early part of James I. is so carried away by his Welsh enthusiasm, that, not content with making a man, scarcely known out of Wales, ‘more than a Hannibal,’ and both a Marcellus and Fabius, and also a shield of Britain, he exclaims, “Oh! had we, in our late expeditions, flayed this great Rice, and clapped his skins upon our drum-head, we had, no question, made an absolute conquest of the French, or rattled them away, or shown ourselves invincible.” Camb. Register, 1795. p. 52.

⁸³ His biographer mentions, that Richard ‘sent commissioners to Carmarthen, to Rice, to take of him an oth of fidelitie. *The oth, Rice ap Thomas stood not upon.*’ Life, p. 86. In his letter to the king, after declaring that he will ‘faithfullie observe’ his oath, which he says he had taken, he adds, ‘I deem it not unseasonable to add this voluntary protestation, that whoever, ill-affected to the state, shall dare to land in those parts of Wales where I have employments, against your majeastie, must resolve with himself to make his entrance and irruption *over my bellie.*’ p. 86. He even adds, ‘This is my religion, that no vowe can lay a stronger obligation upon me, in anie manner of performance, *than my conscience.* My conscience binds me to love and serve my king and country; my vowe can doe noe more. Sir! I am resolutelie bent to spin out my days in well-doing: and sure, sir! could I find myself culpable of one single cogitation repugnant to the allegiance I owe to your majeastie, I should think, alreadie, I have lived over long.’ Ib. p. 86. What can we say of such men? His friend confesses, that he ‘threw the first stone, and opened the gate to Richard’s destruction.’ p. 81.

BOOK IV. fighter that could boast a coat of arms. Richard, however, was outdone, in protestations at least, by his nobility.

REIGN OF RICH. III.

1485.

Richmond's messengers returned to him from his friends, as he reached Shrewsbury, with the comforting assurances, that they were ready and faithful. He advanced to Newport; and pitching his camp on a little hill adjoining, he resolved to rest there from his fatigues that night; which was made more pleasant to him, by Talbot joining him with the whole power of the young earl of Shrewsbury, amounting to 2000 men. Thus reinforced, the next day he proceeded resolutely to Stafford; and there paused, to determine on his future movements.⁸⁴

That Richard was reposing in a false security, and was taken quite by surprise, by Richmond's secrecy and celerity of march, which seems never to have been excelled, is manifest, by several circumstances. It was not till the beginning of August, that his best friend, the duke of Norfolk, was called on for his military forces;⁸⁵ and so late as the 16th of August, his steady adherents at York, sent their serjeant of mace to ask him, if they should send up any aids from that city; and his orders did not reach it till the 19th of August, but three days before the deciding battle; when the gentleman of the mace was directed to march as captain, with 400 men in harness, with all haste possible, to reach him.⁸⁶ Richard despised his

⁸⁴ Graft. 842. Pol. V. 560. Hall, 411.

⁸⁵ The duke writes to a friend, a little before August 15th, 'The king's enemies be on land. The king would have set forth, as upon Monday, (14th August,) but only for our Lady's-day, (Assumption, 15th August); but, for certain, he goeth forward as upon Tuesday. Meet me at Bury; for I purpose to lie at Bury on Tuesday night. Bring with you such company of tall men as ye may goodly make, *at my cost, besides that ye have promised the king.*' 2 Fenn, p. 334.

⁸⁶ See the minutes of the city council, in Drake's Eboracum, p. 120.

competitor too much. A youth, who had never marshalled a field, nor seen a battle, was, as a warrior, contemptible in his eyes ; and so he is mentioned to have expressed himself concerning him, on the day of eonflict.⁷⁷ Hence, when at length he heard of Richmond's arrival in England, his fewness of numbers made the king think preparations unnecessary. He knew that his armed officers were sufficient to destroy them.⁷⁸ He professed an exceeding joy, that the day had now come, when he should have an easy triumph, and the comfort of a future peaceful reign ;⁷⁹ and such would have been the issue, if the battle had rested merely between Richmond and himself, or if his country or his army had proved faithful. But, tho he sent out letters of menace in every county of the kingdom, full of his own fierce ardor for the decision; and commanding every one, whose rank and estates made it obligatory on him to follow his sovereign to war, to join him without delay, on the pain of death and confiscation, after his victory should be gained ;⁸⁰ tho he sent to the duke of Norfolk ; to his son, the earl of Surrey ; to the earl of Northumberland, and other noblemen, to muster their tenants and retainers, and come speedily to him ; and summoned sir Robert Brackenbury from the Tower, with his military force ; and to bring with him the knights whom he suspected ;⁸¹—and altho, by these means, he assembled a

⁷⁷ According to Grafton, Richard called him ‘ a man of small courage, and of less experience in martial art, and feats of war : who never saw army, nor was exercised in martial affairs ; by reason whereof he neither can nor is able, of his own wit or experience, to guide or rule an hoste.’ Graft. 847. So Hall, 415.

⁷⁸ ‘ Disdaining to hear speak of so poor a company, he determined, at first, to take little or no regard to this so small a sparkle.’ Graft. 843. So Fabian remarks, that, as he feared Richmond little, he made at first but small provision against him. p. 519.

⁷⁹ Croyl. 573.

⁸⁰ Ib.

⁸¹ Graft. 843. Hall, 412.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

1485.

greater army than England had usually seen about the person of its king,²² yet it was but a splendid military parade, without either zealous hands or sympathizing hearts. It obeyed awhile from terror, but was prepared to betray. It moved at his command, while the largest portion of its battalions meditated his discomfiture.

Lord Stanley had continued to deceive Richard, with such well-acted hypocrisy, that in the preceding January the king had deputed him, with his son lord Strange, and his brother sir William, to lead all the forces of Cheshire against his invaders, if they should arrive.²³ Tho deep in Richmond's enterprise, he retained the confidential honor of lord steward of the king's household,²⁴ at the hour of the invasion; and thus had the means of communicating the most important information of all Richard's designs, means, friends, and movements, to his rival; and of forming intrigues the most pernicious to his master. A little before Richmond's landing, his prudence led him to desire the king's permission to visit his house and family, from which he had been long absent. Leave was granted, on his sending his eldest son, lord Strange, to attend the court at Nottingham in his stead. Sir William Stanley was, at that time, the chamberlain of North Wales. Thus Wales, and its bordering counties, were officially obeying the men, who, tho appointed over them by the king, were determined to betray him. When Richard heard of Richmond's landing, with a reasonable mistrust of the influence of the earl's mother, the wife of Stanley, he sent for this lord to come

²² Croyl. 573.

²³ Harl. MSS. N° 433, p. 201. It is dated 12 January.

²⁴ Croyl. 573.

to him. Stanley answered, that he was ill of the sweating sickness, then prevailing; but at the same time, his son, lord Strange, endeavored privately to escape from the court. Being taken and questioned, he, like Buckingham, confessed all the plots, as far as he knew them; and astonished the king with the intelligence, that his father and uncle, and sir John Savage, were in league with the invaders. He implored mercy, on the ground, that when his father knew of his detection and danger, he would abandon Richmond, and serve faithfully under the king.⁵⁵ The young nobleman overrated his own importance. His father left him to all the peril of his pusillanimity: and only took the precaution not to join Richmond publicly, till the actual moment of beginning the impending conflict.

The disastrous consequence to Richard, of his being thus taken by surprise, was, that his most faithful adherents were in other parts guarding the districts which he thought most in danger; and that he was compelled to assemble, with undiscriminating haste, a promiscuous mass of force, whose readiness of attendance masqued their indifference or their projected treason, and whose numbers elated his vanity and infatuated his confidence. He knew his own military talents, and he saw, that the exertions of such an army, under his guidance, must be invincible; and altho sir Walter Hungerford, and sir Thomas Bourchier, the knights that accompanied Brackenbury, had, on finding themselves doubted or discovered, left their associates at Stoney Stratford, and gone to Richmond;⁵⁶ yet hoping, that all who had remained

CHAP.
IX.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

⁵⁵ Croyl. 573.

⁵⁶ Both these two knights, whom Richard had greatly benefited, and others, left him. Graft. 843. Hall, 412. Pol. V. 561.

BOOK IV. were attached to him, he did not attempt to read further the secrets of the bosoms of his mailed host, but marched them from Nottingham to Leicester, in the most ostentatious pomp. On Sunday, the 20th of August, with his jewelled crown on his head, seated on a great white steed, surrounded by a chosen guard ; his army marshalled to advance in a marching column of infantry, five and five in a rank, while his cavalry, like expanded wings, ranged and coasted over the country as they moved ; he entered Leicester in magnificent state, after sunset, followed by an immense multitude of people.⁷⁷

REIGN OF RICH. III.
1485.

It was his last day of enjoying, in the sight of his people, the gorgeous state he loved. On Monday, the 21st, he passed from Leicester to the abbey of Mirivall, about eight miles off, and there encamped on Anbeame hill ;⁷⁸ hoping to suppress his antagonist on the morrow. During this night, sir John Savage, who commanded the Chester men, sir Brian Sanforde, and sir Simon Digby, with several others, with a select body of forces, left the royal army, and joined that of Richmond, at Atherston : an important acquisition, from their military experience, as well as their name.⁷⁹

At Stafford, Richmond had been met by sir William Stanley, and after a long consultation with him, moved to Litchfield, and encamped outside of the town during the night. In the morning he entered it, and was received with acclamations. Lord Stanley had reached the same place, with nearly 5000 men,

⁷⁷ Croyl. 573-4. Graft. 844.

⁷⁸ Croyl. 574. 6 Parl. Rolls, 276. Holinshed mentions the name of the hill, p. 755. He calls it Anno Beame ; but this is not a lady's name.

'An beame' is Saxon for 'one tree ;' it was, therefore, One-tree hill.

⁷⁹ Graft. 844. Pol. V. 562. Hall, 413.

CHAP.
IX.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

but hearing of Richmond's approach, repaired to Atherstone. He made this movement to deceive Richard, and to save his son.¹⁰⁰ From Litchfield, Richmond advanced steadily towards Tamworth. In the march he lingered in the rear with a few horsemen; musing, with some uneasiness, at lord Stanley's apparent hesitation, as if he doubted what might yet be his last determination.¹⁰¹ His meditations were so intense, (for as all among whom he came were strange to him, he had nothing but their verbal assurance to rely on for their fidelity) that his army had marched out of his sight and hearing, before he perceived that he was unintentionally left alone. The evening began to obscure the horizon; he lost the road, and wandered about, without knowing where he was. He reached a small village, in jeopardy of falling in with Richard's light horsemen, that were scouring the country for intelligence. He dared not ask a question, but rested there secretly and silently till day-break.¹⁰²

When the light returned, he discovered the traces of his army, and, by joining them, relieved that uneasiness which had been excited by his unaccountable absence. Then departing for Atherstone, he obtained a secret interview with lord Stanley and his

¹⁰⁰ Graft. 842, 3. Pol. V. 561. Hall, 412.

¹⁰¹ Hall remarks, that Richmond 'was not a little afraid, because he was in nowise assured of lord Stanley, who, for fear of his son, as yet inclined to neither.' p. 413. So Pol. V. 562. Stanley seems to have kept both parties in an uncertainty as to his ultimate decision; for the account of the battle in the Harl. MSS. 542, which seems a Stanley statement, in an half poetical form, mentions, that a messenger came to sir William, with the impression, that lord Stanley would fight for Richard, within three hours. 'That would I not,' quod the knight, 'for all the world in Cristentie.' Nicholl has printed this, p. 213.

¹⁰² Graft. 844. Pol. V. 562. Hall, 413.

BOOK IV. brother, in a little close near, and settled their plans for the next day's battle.¹⁰³

REIGN OF RICH. III. The agitations of anxious mind, or the secret agencies of diseased nature, shook the frame of Richard; during the repose he sought in the night before the battle.

1485. Figures of black shapes, like demons, arose in his dreams, and moved around him, and would not suffer him to rest. He awoke before daylight, exhausted, terrified, and unmanned. He was ashamed of his perturbations; and fearing lest his attendants should misconstrue the nervous affections of a weak body for unworthy fear, he confessed the disturbing dreams. His chaplain was absent. His morning refreshment, to recruit his strength for the day's task, was not ready. His trembling form, his attenuated, pale, and discolored face, were too perceptible to himself, not to be accounted for to others; and he preferred a disclosure, that must have been reluctant, of his dismaying dream, to the suspicion of unmanly cowardice.¹⁰⁴ He added, that the event of that day would be fatal to England, whatever party conquered. If he were victorious, he avowed a determination to take a deadly revenge on all who supported his adversary; and if Richmond triumphed, he believed he would be as sanguinary.¹⁰⁵ Finding Stanley still kept

¹⁰³ Graft. 844. Pol. V. 562. Hall, 413.

¹⁰⁴ I consider the Croyland account, p. 574, to be the most authentic, as it is the earliest, of this scene; and have therefore adopted it. Pol. V. 562, Grafton, p. 845, and Hall, 414, are very similar. Drayton and Shakspeare, with the gratuitous inventions of poets, have turned the black shapes into the ghosts of those whose deaths were popularly ascribed to the king. Pol. Virgil refers these spectral appearances, not to his sleep, but to his conscience, which, he adds, if at no other time, will, at least at the eve of death, represent to us our misdeeds, and give us intimations of their future punishment. The king's agitation of mind may have disturbed his bodily functions; but we need not go further than these, to account for his harrowing dream.

¹⁰⁵ Croyland, 574. What was believed and circulated of Richard's vindictive intentions, we may see in the Harl. MSS. N° 542. 'He swore,

CHAP.
IX.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

aloof, he ordered his son's head to be taken off. But his people anticipated so much uncertainty as to the event of the battle, that they did not choose to commit themselves to the consequences of such a violence. They delayed its execution till the armies began to move; and then, reminding the king that the battle was beginning, and that he could execute his vengeance the moment he had secured the victory, the young nobleman was saved.¹⁰⁶

The king's frame and spirits were too much agitated by his nervous emotions, to have that alacrity of mind, and cheerfulness of countenance, which he had always displayed on the morning of a battle.¹⁰⁷ But he exerted his military skill, and ranged his troops for the conflict, so as to ensure a speedy victory. His plan was to intimidate and outfront his enemy; and, therefore, he extended his van-guard to an unusual length. In the centre he placed his archers, like a strong fortified bulwark, under Norfolk and his son.¹⁰⁸ He supported this by a select body, in a dense square, commanded by himself, with his diadem on his head, with wings of cavalry on each side of his battle.¹⁰⁹

that from the town of Lancastre to Shrowsberye, knight ne squire, he wold leave none alyve: and he wold deal theyr lands to his knyghts, from the Holyhead to St. David's land.' 'Where are castles and towers high, I shall make parks and plain fields. They shall all repent, that ever he rose against his king.' Nicholl's Hutt. 208. With such exaggerations was this king's memory pursued. B. Andreas ascribes to him similar sentiments. MS. Domit. A. 18.

¹⁰⁶ Croy. 574. Graft. 852. ¹⁰⁷ Pol. V. 562. Graft. 845.

¹⁰⁸ Pol. V. 562. Graft. 845, 6. Hall, 414. The 'instar munitissimi valli' of Polydore: and the like, 'a strong fortified trench or bulwark' of Grafton, into which Richard is stated to have formed what may be called his artillery, are what the following passage, in the Harl. MS. No. 542, alludes to: 'Richard had seven score sargent, that were chained and locked in a row; and as many bombards, and thousands of moris-pikes, harquebushees,' &c. MSS. Ib. Nicholl's Hutt. 215.

¹⁰⁹ Graft. 846. Hall, 414. 'He himself the second bringing on, which was a perfect square,' says Drayton, who lived near the place of battle, and describes it with care.

BOOK

IV.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

1485.

Richmond had pitched his army very near his enemy's camp, and rested tranquilly that night. In the earliest part of the morning, his men having armed themselves at his command, he sent to lord Stanley, who had posted himself between both armies, to come, and draw up his soldiers in the most effective array. The lord desired him to follow his own judgment in their disposition, as he could not be with him till the most convenient time of co-operation. This refusal again alarmed Richmond, who was now approaching the great crisis of his peculiar adventure, and who foresaw his certain ruin, if Stanley either disappointed him, or should too long hesitate. But he had two able advisers with him, in lord Oxford and sir John Savage. With their aid, he formed his force into three divisions ; making his front as extended as he could safely spread it ; and, therefore, from the small number of his own forces, slender and weak. The centre, consisting of his archers, he committed to Oxford ; the right wing to sir Gilbert Talbot ; the left to sir John Savage, who had so recently abandoned Richard to join him.¹¹⁰ His own army was but 5000 men ; but lord Stanley on one side of him had as many more ; and sir William, on the other, commanded 3000.¹¹¹ It was obvious that the movements of the two Stanleys would decide the fate of the conflict. Richard's army doubled all these.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Graft. 846. Pol. V. 563. Sir John Savage was one of the mourners at the funeral of Edward IV. as were sir John Cheney, and sir Walter Hungerford, who were now with Richmond. Harl. MSS. N° 6111. Richard had trusted Savage so fully, as to make him one of the commissioners to take the oath of allegiance from the people of Kent. He had made him knight of his body, and rewarded him with grants. Harl. MSS. 433, pp. 28. 102. 131. 141. He had put a similar confidence in Bourchier. Ib. p. 142. He had also rewarded Hungerford, and made him an esquire of his body, and keeper of parks in Wells. Harl. MSS. p. 16. 27.

¹¹¹ Graft. 846. Hall, 414. Pol. V. 563.

¹¹² Ib. The Harl. MSS. N° 542, which, though it seems a versified

But Northumberland, who governed almost a third of his force, was prepared to display a neutralizing spirit, that, in the shock of battle, would, from its disheartening effects, be worse than hostility.¹¹³

Richard, calling his chieftains together, addressed them in a short and energetic speech. He expressed his regret for the one criminal action by which he had sullied his name, and destroyed his comfort. He painted to them the inexperience of Richmond, and the weakness of his army. "Wherefore, advance your standards; let each man give but one sure stroke, and the battle is our own. As for myself, I assure you, that I will this day either triumph by victory, or suffer death for immortal fame."¹¹⁴ His address was received with apparent applause; but his different leaders had settled in their minds the various parts they should act. Some were steady, resolute and animated; others determined to stand still and look on; and some to side only with the conquerors.¹¹⁵ With an army thus broken in opinion, and unattached in feeling, what skill or valor could avail?

Richmond rode from rank to rank thro his army, giving comfortable words to all; and then ascending a small hill near, "armed in all pieces but his helmet," he prepared to address the whole line. He was not tall, but his countenance was animated; his yellow hair, like burnished gold, flowed gracefully about his quick, grey and shining eyes¹¹⁶; and his loud voice echoing round them in a bold tone and

CHAP.
IX.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

Battle of
Bosworth
field,
22 August.

account, cut down into a prose narrative, yet preserves some valuable particulars, says, 'kyng Richard in a marris dyd stand nomred to XX thousand, and three under his bannar.' MSS. ib. Nicholl's Hatt. 216.

¹¹³ Graft. 851.

¹¹⁴ Though it is not likely that we have the words of the two speeches of Richard and Henry, in Grafton and Hall, yet they have most probably given us the topics. ¹¹⁵ Graft. 847. ¹¹⁶ Ib. Hall, 416.

easy eloquence, conveyed to them his declaration of his trust in heaven for victory; his indignant exposition of Richard's unnatural cruelty; his intimation, to prevent alarm, that it was not numbers which gave success; his pledge to them, that in such a quarrel, rather than fail, they should find him a dead corpse on the cold ground, than a prisoner on a carpet in a lady's chamber; and his appeal to heaven for the triumph, as they came to avenge murder. He ended thus: "Get this day the victory, and be conquerors—lose this day's battle, and be slaves. In the name of the Supreme, then, and of St. George, let every man courageously advance forth his standard."¹¹⁷

The soldiers now on both sides buckled their helms and shook their bills, while the archers bent their bows and flushed the feathers of their arrows. A great impassable marsh divided the two armies. Richmond's made the first movement, and rapidly placed themselves with their right on this marsh, which not only protected that part, but caused them to have the sun at their backs, while it shone full dazzling in the face of their opponents.¹¹⁸ This judicious manœuvre began the battle, with a secured flank and an encouraging advantage.

The most faithful part of Richard's army was the division which the duke of Norfolk commanded. It was essential to break this, before the victory could be hoped for: and Oxford resolved to attempt this achievement.¹¹⁹ To attack it with effect, the earl suddenly condensed his front. Their antagonists mistrusting some fraud, paused awhile their destructive

¹¹⁷ Graft. 847. Hall, 416.

¹¹⁸ Graft. 849. Hall, 418. The marsh had been drained in Holinshed's time. p. 758.

¹¹⁹ Croyl. 574.

exertions. But Oxford having combined all his men into one connected band, made a furious attack on Richard's centre; while lord Stanley, throwing off all disguise, charged from the right flank.¹²⁰ Richard omitted no exertions to counteract the effect of this alarming movement. But the largest part of his army did not choose to fight at all; and Northumberland also betraying him, drew off his men to a little distance from the battle, and remained a tranquil spectator of the now desperate and unequal conflict.¹²¹

There is a tradition, that at one period of the struggle Richard turned out of it to refresh himself, by drinking at a well.¹²² It was probably at this time that his staunch friends, seeing the treachery that was entangling him, brought him a swift and light

CHAP.
IX.

REIGN OF
RICH. III.

¹²⁰ Graft. 849, 850. Hall, 418. Pol. V. 563. Cannon appear to have been used; 'the archers let theyr arrows fyfe; they shot off goonns.' Harl. MSS. 542. Nicholl, 216.

Thus Drayton,

----- ' So thro' the misty smoke,
By shot and ordnance made, a thundering noise was heard.'

¹²¹ Graft. 851; Hall, 419; Holins. 789, mention, that Northumberland stood still, with a great company, and intermitted not in the battle.

Drayton says,

----- ' He doth but vainly look
For succors from the great Northumberland this while,
That from the battle scarce three quarters of a mile
Stood with his power of horse; nor once was seen to stir.'

The inactivity of other parts of his army is mentioned by Grafton. 'The greatest number which, compelled by fear of the king, and not of their mere voluntary motion, came to the field, gave never a stroke.' p. 850.

¹²² Dr. S. Parr, whose classical erudition, few, if any, of his contemporaries equalled, interested himself with exploring this spring. In his letter on it, dated the 13th of September 1813, he says, 'Six or seven years ago, I found Dick's well, out of which, the tradition is, that Richard drank during the battle. It was in dirty, mossy ground, and seemed to me in danger of being destroyed by the cattle. I therefore bestirred myself to have it preserved.' He composed the following inscription for it. 'Aqua, ex loco puteo hausta, situm sedavit Ricardus tertius rex Anglia cum Henrico comite de Richmondia acerrime atque infensissime praelatis, et vita pariter ac sceptro ante noctem curiturus, 2 kal. Sept. A.D. 1485.' Nich. Hutt. Bosw. add. x. xi.

BOOK
IV.
REIGN OF
RICH. III.
1485.

horse, and advised him to quit the field, and save himself by flight.¹²³ He resolutely refused. He replaced his beloved crown conspicuously on his head, bent his mind to the mortal result, and exclaimed, with a heroism of soul that few men can command, “Not one foot will I fly: I will this day either end all my battles, or here finish my life. I will die king of England.”¹²⁴

He closed his helmet, and rushed again into the yet contending forces; but his impetuosity was soon tempted into a fatal precipitation. He had sustained the conflict with a bravery rarely exampled under such circumstances, and kept victory at bay for two hours, when he saw the earl of Richmond before him not far off, with a small number of men at arms. Too eager to terminate the contest by a personal encounter, he spurred his horse and rode out of the side of his battalion into the lines of his adversary, to reach his then near competitor. He fixed his spear firmly in its rest; and tho not strong in body, yet so furious and so vigorous was his assault, that he drove his lance thro sir William Brandon’s arm-pit, who was upholding and waving the earl’s standard, and who fell dead at his feet. Richmond approached to meet him; but sir John Cheyney advancing first, the king,

¹²³ Graft. 851. Pol. V. 564. This advice has been ascribed to Catesby.

¹²⁴ Ib. Harl. MS. N° 542. Nic. Hutt. 217. An interesting incident is mentioned of sir John Byron and sir Gervase Clifton, friends and neighbors in Nottinghamshire. Byron joined Henry; Clifton fought with Richard. They had agreed, that whichever party triumphed, the supporter of that should intercede with the victor for his friend’s estate, for the benefit of his family. In the midst of the battle, Byron saw Clifton fall, in the opposite ranks. He ran to him, sustained him on his shield, and entreated him to surrender. Clifton faintly exclaimed, ‘All is over: remember your promise: use all your interest that my lands be not taken from my children;’ and expired. Byron performed this promise, and the estate was preserved to the Clifton family. Hutton’s Bos. Field, 117, 9. There are grants to Clifton, in the Harl. MSS. 433, as pp. 81, 96.

with a second shock unhorsed the gallant knight at the first charge, tho a man of large size and powerful strength.¹²⁵ With his sword he then labored to cut a passage towards his rival, thro the friends that crowded between ; and he had again more than balanced the yet doubtful struggle, when sir William Stanley, seeing the dangerous crisis, and Richard's impending victory, and also the advantage which the king's daring courage had given him, suddenly surrounded Richard, with his hitherto neutral force of 3,000 men.¹²⁶ This measure precluded all hope of either life or victory to the king. He cried out repeatedly, that he was betrayed ; and yet, tho his fate was inevitable, he never shrunk from daring it ; but exclaiming, as his sword flashed on the armor of his opponents, " Treason ! treason ! treason !" ¹²⁷ as if to shew that by treachery alone he was conquered ; he continued to hew down those he reached, till, exhausted by wounds and fatigue, he fell manfully fighting in the middle of surrounding hosts, who admired, while they suffered by his valor ; fearless of all consequences, except disgrace as a soldier, and therefore anxious at that time only not to survive defeat. Like his father at Wakefield, he would not even retreat, to fight a more advantageous battle. If Northumberland had charged with the forces he kept aloof, when sir William Stanley surrounded the king,

¹²⁵ Pol. V. 563. Graft. 849, 850. Hall, 418, 419. Drayton.

¹²⁶ Pol. Virgil says, that Henry's soldiers ' victoriam jam pene desperabant, (p 563) when sir William made the charge that rescued Henry, and destroyed Richard. So Grafton intimates, ' being almost in despair of victory.' 850. So Holinsh. 759. Henry's own remark afterwards, on this important service of sir William's, was, that ' tho he came time enough to save his life, yet he stayed long enough to endanger it.' Lord Bacon's Hen. VII. p. 61.

¹²⁷ We derive this striking circumstance from Rous, a contemporary. p. 218.

BOOK IV. he would have preserved his life, and prevented his defeat. We can hardly conceive how a nobleman who had acted with him in destroying Rivers, and who, after Richard's other actions, had taken or kept so many honors and bounties from him, could stand, with cool faithlessness, and see his sovereign exert the most heroic valor against such ungenerous odds, and be almost, if not quite, in the hearing of his death-cries of treason—and yet not move one step, or send one man to his assistance. To let the king he had sworn to defend be thus beaten down and slain in his immediate presence, treacherously withholding relief,—was one of the most stubborn efforts of human insensibility that history has recorded.

No talents could save Richard, amid associates like these. With such a nobility, he was environed in a fatal labyrinth, from which death only could release him.¹²⁸ His crown had been hewed from his head, and was found full of dents in the field, by Bray, who delivered it to lord Stanley.¹²⁹ The battle had ceased when Richard expired. Richmond, apprized of the decisive victory, kneeled down and breathed his earnest thanks to heaven, for the triumph. Then ascending a hill, publicly thanked all his soldiers for their

¹²⁸ This battle is usually called, The Battle of Bosworth Field; but the scene of action is called the Field of Redmore, in the York Register, which mentions the report of its issue, brought to the corporation ‘by John Spon, sent unto the field of Redmore, to bring tidings from the same to the city.’ Drake’s Ebor. p. 121. So I observe Drayton thus styles it:

‘O Redmore! then, it seemed, thy name was not in vain,
When, with a thousand’s blood, the earth was colored red.’

Redmore means, literally, red marsh, and was, perhaps, the name of the marsh on which Richmond lodged his right flank. But Henry VII. in his proclamation, three days after the battle, addressed to the same corporation, says, ‘Richard was slain at a place called Sandeford, within the shire of Leicester.’ Drake’s Ebor. p. 122.

¹²⁹ Harl. MSS. 542. Nicholl, p. 217.

bravery ; and ordered the wounded to be taken care of, and the dead to be buried. The field rang with universal acclamations ; and sir William Stanley, seeing the general feeling, placed the crown on Henry's head ; and saluted him king, on the field of battle.¹³⁰ Henry then moved his army into Leicester that night ; and resting two days to refresh his friends, and receive their congratulations, prepared for his march to the metropolis. The dead body of Richard was selected from the rest ; and, with an inhumanity, that disgraced the conquerors, but which corresponded with the unpitying feelings of the age, was stripped and thrown naked, and besmeared with blood and dirt, on the back of a horse, in the most contumelious manner ; and after being exposed a while to the vulgar gaze, was buried without honor, in the Gray Friars' church, Leicester.¹³¹ About 1000 of his followers fell ; and among these were the duke of Norfolk,¹³² lord Ferrers, and sir Robert Brackenbury.¹³³ Their deaths proved their steady fidelity ; sir William

¹³⁰ See Gent. Mag. 1789, vol. 59. p. 424.

¹³¹ Graft. 851-2. Pol. V. 594. Hall, 419. He was so carried, that his head was crushed against a stone on the bridge. Speed, 737.

¹³² Of this nobleman, our old chronicler says truly, ‘He regarded more his oath, his honor, and his promise made to king Richard, like a gentleman ; and, as a faithful subject to his prince, he absented not himself from his master : but, as he faithfully lived under him, so he manfully died with him.’ Holling, 759.

¹³³ It is said of Brackenbury, that, meeting Hungerford in the battle, who had quitted him on the march, he called him a deserting traitor. The latter replied, that he would not answer him by words ; and aimed a blow at his head, that would have felled him, if Brackenbury had not caught it on his shield, which shivered with the force of the blow. Hungerford, with chivalric spirit, delivered his own target to his esquire, exclaiming, that he would take no advantage ; they should fight on equal terms. They renewed the conflict, till Brackenbury’s helmet was made useless, and he was sorely wounded. Bourchier, who had left him with Hungerford, cried out, ‘Spare his life, brave Hungerford ! he has been our friend, and may be so again.’ But it was too late : he died upon the spot. Hutt. Bosw. Field, 115-7.

BOOK
IV.REIGN OF
RICH. III.

Catesby escaped, only to be soon taken, and to be beheaded shortly afterwards.¹²⁴

Thus fell Richard, the victim of treachery unparalleled ;¹²⁵ for there seems to have been no national movement in favor of Richmond. It was a perfidious combination of five noblemen, which destroyed Richard. Exclusively of the force of the two Stanleys, Henry came to the battle with only 5000 ; of these he had brought 2000 with him, and 2000 were the earl of Shrewsbury's under Talbot ; so that, excepting these, all the rest who had joined him from his landing at Milford, to Bosworth field, including the mighty Rice ap Thomas, amounted but to 1000 men. Hence, it was four English noblemen ; the two Stanleys, Shrewsbury, and Northumberland ; and the conscientious sir Rice, who dethroned Richard, by betraying and deserting him. The nation had no share in the conflict, notwithstanding all that is said of the king's unpopularity. It was an ambush of a few perfidious and disaffected noblemen, against the

¹²⁴ On the 25th of August, three days after the battle, and on the day that he was beheaded, Catesby made his will. Of Henry, he says, ‘He is called a full gracious prince; and I never offended him, by my good and free will; for God I take to my judge, I have ever loved him.’ He adds, looking forward to his approaching execution, ‘Pray you in every place, see clearness in my soul; and pray fast, and I shall for you; and Jesu have mercy on my soule, Amen. My lords Stanley, Strange, and all that blood! help! and pray for my soule, for ye have not for my body, as I trusted in you. Lett my lord Lovel come to grace; then that ye show him that he pray for me. And uncle John! remember my soule, as ye have done my body, and better.’ Dugd. Warw. 789. There are some expressions in this extract, of attachment to Henry, which make it doubtful if even Catesby was, at last, faithful to Richard.

¹²⁵ The report, given the next day, to the corporation of York, is thus entered in their register. ‘On 23d August, it was showed by divers persons, especially by John Spon, sent unto the field of Redmore for tidings, that king Richard, thro the *great treason* of the duke of Norfolk, and many others, *that turned against him*, was, with many other lords, nobility of the north parts, piteously slain and murdered, to the great heaviness of this city.’ Drake’s Ebor. p. 121. The name of Norfolk has got inserted instead of Northumberland and the Stanleys.

crown, which succeeded by their hypocrisy ; and Richard perished by one of those factions in his aristocracy, from which, by taking the crown, it seemed likely that he had rescued himself. He had suppressed violently what he thought dangerous, and he was overwhelmed by the explosion of a new mine, which he had not suspected to be forming beneath him, because it was prepared and fired by those whom gratitude, honor and conscience ought to have made faithful and attached. Whatever had been his conduct towards his nephew, he had done nothing to them, to deserve that they should have destroyed him. But it was the religious ordination of the moral governor of human life, that a crown which had been usurped by crime and treachery should be torn from the usurper by criminality and perfidy.

END OF VOL. III.

James & Luke G. Hansard & Sons,
near Lincoln's-Inn Fields, London.

